PATIENCE. P. H. Van Hove. sculp:

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The ART of

PATIENCE

AND

Balm of Gilead

UNDER ALL

Afflictions,

An APPENDIX to the ART of

CONTENTMENT,

By the AUTHOR of

The Whole Duty of Man.

It is good that a Man should both hope, and quietly wait for the Salvation of the Lord, Lam. 3. 26.

The Second Impression with Additional Prayers Suitable to the several Occasions.

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THE PREFACE.

THIS Tract meeting with ſo Candid a Reception, at its firſt Appearance, has Encouraged it to make a farther Eſſay; And what was omitted in the former Impreſſion, is incerted in this: viz. *The Prayers annexed to the ſeveral Sections, which doubtleſs will prove very acceptable and Practical to the Contemplative. The* Original *Part of this Diſcourſe, was Extracted from a Foundation, laid by a Learned and Reverend Prelate, upon whoſe Baſis this Superſtructure is Erected: He, like a Wiſe Maſter-Builder laid the Corner Stone, as a Pattern for others to imitate; and they which attain to his height of Perfection, ſhall enjoy what Chriſt ſaid to his Diſciples,* In their Patience, they ſhall poſſeſs their own Souls.

Bp. *Hall's* Balm of Gilead.

And indeed, we never wanted more Motives to excite us to this Duty, than now: When this Virtue appears ſo diſſentaneous to moſt Diſpoſitions: But I would to God thoſe Turbulent Spirits would liſten to the grave Council of St. Chryſoſtom, If with a Deſire of Judging, thou wouldſt needs be a Judge, I will ſhew thee the Judgment-Seat, which

ſhall be adventageous to thee, and no way touch thy Conſcience; Let thy Mind and Thought ſit down to give Sentence, call forth all thy Offences, and begin to ſay with thy ſelf, Why haſt thou done this or that.

This private Examining of Themſelves would ſoon make theſe Publick Controllers, of all others, by plauſible Pretenses of Reformation; look nearer Home, and ſubdue that in themſelves, they are apt to ſpy in others. St. Paul *blamed their Courſe, whoſe manner was to* go from Houſe to Houſe, Tit. 1. 13. Eſau, *that loſt the Bleſſing, was Hunting; but* Jacob *that enjoy'd it, and the Inheritance, kept at home,* Gen. 17. 30. *The Juſt Man, ſaith* Solomon, *firſt accuſeth himſelf; And* Judah *ſpake humbly of an Offender, when he ſaid,* She is more Righteous than I, *Gen.* 38. 26.

But let ſuch hot Spirits take along with them this Information, That Obedience is better than Sacrifice; *and that he which* giveth Grace to the Humble, *is alſo ſaid to* reſiſt the Proud: *And they may be well aſſured, that this Counterfeit Coyn will prove droſs when it comes to the Teſt. It is an eaſier Task for Malecontents to reprehend others, than to amend themſelves; as* thoſe who have blemiſh'd Eyes, think the Sky ever cloudy. *Nothing more common with troubleſome Diſpoſitions, which* have not known the way of Peace, *than to be ever Contending, ſeldom Contented.*

The Elements, *though in quality divers, yet they accord, for the Conſtitution of the*

Corporeal

Corporeal Nature: And I would to God, *that all who profeſs and call themſelves* Chriſtians, *would accord together for the Conſervation of Church and State,* That Peace may dwell in our Land: *We are all ſheep of that Fold, whereof Chriſt is the Shepherd; Stones of that Building whereof he is the chief Corner Stone; Branches of that Vine, whereof he is the Stock; We have but one* God *for our Father that Created us; one* Saviour *that Redeemed us; and one* Holy-Ghoſt *our Sanctifier, that adorns us.*

We are here but Pilgrims and Strangers, and we ſhall one day find, that a Peaceable Chriſtian Life, with a good departure hence, ſhall bear a greater Value than all Temporal Enjoyments, can afford us; In purſuance of which, let us all endeavour to learn theſe following Inſtructions, by which means we ſhall not only attain to be Schollars, but Proficients in this School of Patience, *and acquire that Conqueſt over our unruly Paſſions, and inordinate Affections, but ſhall be enabled cheerfully to* run with Patience the Race which is ſet before us, looking unto Jeſus, the Author and Finiſher of our Faith; who for the Joy that was ſet before him, endured the Croſs, deſpiſing the Shame, and is ſet down at the Right Hand of the Throne of God, *Heb.* 12. 1, 2. *and therefore, beſeech we* God, *That* Mercy and Truth may meet together, that Righteouſneſs and Peace may Kiſs each other; *and that his Glory may dwell in our Land until we come to inhabite in the Land of Glory.*

THE

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THE

The ART of

PATIENCE

AND

Balm of Gilead

UNDER ALL

Afflictions,

SECT. I.

Of the Connexion between Humility, Meekneſs and Patience.

1. GOD, the Fountain of Goodneſs; from whom cometh *Every Good and Perfect Gift*, Jam. 1. 17. hath laid down ſuch Rules and Precepts in *Holy Scripture*, that whoever is Diligent in the ſearch, *Shall find in them Eternal Life*, John 5. 39. We are commanded to *Follow Peace with all Men, and Holineſs, without which no Man ſhall ſee the Lord*,

Heb. 12. 14. and to practice those Celestial Duties of *Humilty*, *Meekness* and *Patience*.

2. HUMILITY is first a Duty we owe to *God*, which is to have such a Sense of our Unworthiness, and his Excellency, as may operate in us a lowly and unfeign'd Submission to Him: Now, this Submission is twofold; *First*, To his Will; *Secondly*, To his Wisdom. The Submission to his Will is of two sorts, Obedience and *Patience*: Obedience is our yielding up our selves with alacrity to do what his Divine Will and Pleasure command us; and to enable us to perform This, *Humility* is exceeding necessary: And to acquire this Obedience, we must endeavour to possess our Hearts with the Sense of that great unspeakable Distance, between *God* and us. To consider Him a *God* of Infinite Majesty, Power and Glory; and we poor Worms of the Earth: He of Infinite Purity and Holiness; and we polluted and dead, in Trespasses and Sins: He of Power able to do all things; and we nothing, but by his Divine Assistance.

3. A *Second* sort of Submission to his Will, is *Patience*; the Subject-matter of our Discourse. This consists in suffering his Will, as that of Obedience did in acting it; and is composed of a voluntary yielding to what ever Afflictions *God* is pleased to inflict upon us: In this, *Humility* is a great Assistant and renders things easie to us; perswading us not to murmur, or repine at any thing *God* does; but let what Afflictions soever come, though in the heaviest kind, we may be always ready to say, *Thy Will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven*: And with old *Eli*, when that great Affliction came of *Gods* threatning the Destruction of his *Family*, the loss of the *Priesthood*, the Cutting off both his *Sons* in one Day; yet considering it was the *Lord*, inabled him calmly to yield to 'em, saying, *Let him do what seemeth*

seemeth him good, 1 Sam. 3. 18. The same Effect it had on *David*, in his Affliction; *I was dumb, I opened not my Mouth, because thou didst it*, Psal. 39. 9. *God* doing it, silenc'd all Murmurings and Repinings in him: And it must operate the same Effect in us, in all our Afflictions, if we intend to acquire this Duty of *Patience*.

4. THEREFORE, when ever *God* strikes, we are not only *Patiently* to endure his *Rod*, but kiss it also; that is, be truly thankful, that he is pleased not to *Give us over to our own Hearts Lusts*, Psal. 18. 12. But still continuing his tender Care over us; sending *Afflictions* as so many *Messengers*, to call us to himself. From whence we may learn, what an absurd Folly it is to murmur at those Stripes, which are design'd so graciously.

5. THIS Duty is not compleated, by only a Quietness and Thankfulness under *Afflictions*; but there must be *Fruitfulness* also, or all the rest will be of no Advantage; which is the production of that, for which the *Afflictions* were sent; *viz.* the Amendment of our Lives: So that, in Time of *Affliction*, it is a necessary Duty to examine our Hearts and Lives, and make a severe Scrutiny what Sins have provoked *God* to scourge us; and whatsoever we find our selves guilty of, humbly to confess to him, and immediately to forsake them; Redeeming what we have lost, the Time to come.

6. OUR next Duty concerning *Patience*, is, That we are as much bound to comply with one sort of *Sufferings*, as another, whether they be immediately from *God*, as *Sickness*, loss of *Friends*, or the like; or whether it be from Men, who sometimes are Instruments of afflicting us; and cannot prejudice us, without *Gods* Permission: And *God* may as well create the Instruments of punishing us, as to do it directly Himself; for it is a Counterfeit *Patience*,

that pretends to ſubmit to *God*, and yet can bear nothing from Men. We ſee an Inſtance of Holy *Job*, who is recorded in Sacred Scripture, as a Pattern of true *Patience*; he made no ſuch Difference in his *Afflictions*; but took the loſs of his Cattle, which the *Chaldeans* and *Sabeans* robb'd him of, with as much *Meekneſs*, as he did that which was conſumed by *Fire* from *Heaven*. Therefore, whatever we ſuffer from Men, if it be never ſo unjuſt in reſpect of them, we are humbly to confeſs it is moſt juſt in reſpect of *God*; and inſtead of looking upon them with *Rage* and *Revenge*, as the vulgar cuſtom of the World is, we are to look up to *God*, and acknowledge his Juſtice in the *Affliction*; imploring his Pardon moſt earneſtly for thoſe Sins, which have provoked his wrath againſt us, and *patiently* and thankfully to bear thoſe Sufferings, till He ſhall in his own good time, ſee fit to remove them; ſtill ſaying with *Job*, *Bleſſed be the Name of the Lord*, Job 1. 21.

7. A *Second* ſort of Submiſſion in *Humility*, is to the Wiſdom of *God*; and that is, to acknowledge him Infinitely Wiſe: And whatſoever he doth, we muſt confeſs it the beſt and fitteſt to be done: And this Confeſſion we are to put in practice, both in his Commands, and in his diſpoſing and ordering of all things. *Firſt*, Whatſoever he commands us to believe, we are to believe, how impoſſible ſoever it ſeems to our ſhallow Underſtandings. *Secondly*, To do whatever he commands us, how oppoſite ſoever it be to our Carnal Reaſon and Humour; and to conclude in both, that his *Commandments* are moſt reaſonable, *and not grievous*, 1 Joh. 5. 3.

8. NEXT, we are to ſubmit to his Wiſdom, in diſpoſing and ordering of Things; which is to acknowledge, He diſpoſes of all things moſt wiſely: Not only to the World in General; but in what concerns every one in particular: So that, in what

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Condition ſoever we are in, *We are to be Content*, 1 Tim. 6. 8. and not to be impatient and diſturb'd, at any Choice which *God* makes; ſince he chuſes for us, who cannot err: But to leave all things to him, to fit us with ſuch an Eſtate and Condition, as he ſees beſt for us. Perhaps, it may not pleaſe our unreaſonable Humours, becauſe we cannot live in that Splendour equal to our Superiours: And the Reaſon is, we are ſo full of our ſelves, that we can ſee nothing beyond it. We expect *God* ſhould place us where we pleaſe, though by it he diſcompoſes the whole Scheme of his Providence: But he, like a wiſe Maſter-Builder, knows that every Stone is not fit for the Corner, not every little Rafter for the main Beam: And ſure, there cannot be a more vile contempt of the Divine Wiſdom, than to diſpute his Choice, who knows what is fitter for us, than we do our ſelves. Therefore, when ever we are diſappointed of any of our Aims or Wiſhes, let us not only *patiently*, but joyfully ſubmit to it, and acknowledge, that it is certainly beſt for us, it being choſen by the unerring Wiſdom of our Heavenly Father.

9. HAVING ſpoken of the *Humility* due towards *God*; I am now to ſpeak of *Humility*, as it concerns our ſelves; which will be no leſs neceſſary than the former. This *Humility* is of two ſorts; the firſt is, the having a mean and low Opinion of our ſelves; the ſecond is, being content that others ſhould have ſo of us. The firſt of theſe is contrary to Pride, and the ſecond to Vain-glory. Pride caſt the Angels out of Heaven; and it is the greateſt Sin the Devil hath been guilty of: And we may frequently find in Scripture the hainouſneſs of it, *Prov.* 16. 5. *Every one that is proud in Heart, is an abomination to the* Lord; and in *Chap.* 6. among many things which the *Lord* hates, a *Proud Look* is ſet as

the

the chiefeſt. It is indeed a moſt prolifick Vice, and there are few Sins to which it is not either Parent or Nurſe to: There are many places of Scripture, which ſhews the deteſtableneſs of it; I ſhall only add one, *James* 4.7. *That God reſiſteth the Proud, but giveth Grace to the Humble.*

10. AND the means of relinquiſhing this Sin of *Pride*, is perform'd by *Humility*, by theſe Directions: *Firſt*, We are to conſider the hainouſneſs of the Sin, with that Regret as may operate in us no petty Contempt, but a deep and irreconcileable Hatred againſt it. *Secondly*, To be vigilant over our Hearts, that they foment not any Originals of it, never ſuffering them to feed on the Phantaſm of our own Magnificence: But when ever ſuch Cogitations ariſe, let us reverberate it immediately with the Memorial of ſome of our Follies and Vices; ſo we may make this very Motion of our *Pride* an occaſion of *Humility*. *Thirdly*, We are to make no Compariſon of our ſelves with thoſe we think are more fooliſh and vicious than we are, leſt we fall into the ſame Snare with the *Phariſee*, *Luk.* 16. 11. Extol our ſelves for being better: But if we will compare, and aſſociate our ſelves, let us do it with the Wiſe, Sober, and Religious; and there we ſhall find, we come ſo far ſhort of 'em, that we can have no high Eſteem of our ſelves, but rather a more Submiſſion to *Humility*, than we had before. *Laſtly*, Let us humbly and earneſtly invoke the *Almighty*, That he would eradicate all Degrees of this Sin in us, and make us of the number of thoſe that are *Poor in Spirit*, Mat. 5.3. to whom the Bleſſing even of Heaven it ſelf, is pronounced and promiſed.

11. THE next Vice in oppoſition to *Humility*, is Vain-glory; which is a hungring and thirſting after the Praiſe of Men: and firſt, that it is a Sin, the Words of our Saviour prove it, John 5.44. *How can*

ye believe, that receive Honour one of another? So it is not only a Sin, but such a one as hinders the Reception of *Christ* into the Heart. *Secondly*, The great danger of this Sin is such, if it keep *Christ* out of our Hearts, it brings us to inevitable Destruction; for all our Hope of escaping the Wrath to come, depends in our Reception of Him: And this Sin where ever it takes Possession in the Minds of Men, it endangers the being guilty of many others; and he that seeks so much for popular Applause, may be in danger of the Mobile's Hissing, and without Repentance, in danger *of Hell Fire*, Mat. 5. 22.

12. THIRDLY, The Folly of it is, we pursue after a Blast of Wind, the Breath of Men, which affords us no real Advantage. Secondly, It is not only unprofitable, but dolorous and difficult also; for he that eagerly seeks Praise, is not Master of himself, but must suit all his Actions to that end and purpose; and contrary to what his own Reason and Conscience dictates to him, he must take care to do what will bring him in Commendations; and so captivates himself to every one that hath a Tongue, to extol him. And this Sin is further prejudicial, when it is used in Religious Duties, or any Christian Acts, it destroys all the Fruits of it: They that pray, or distribute Alms to be seen of Men, must accept of that for their Portion, *Mat.* 6. 2. *Verily, I say unto you, They have their Reward*; for they must expect none from *God*, but the reward of those Hypocrites, *that love the Praise of Men, more than the Praise of God:* And they that make such a miserable Exchange, are not only guilty of Folly, but are in danger of *losing their own Souls*, Mark 8. 36.

13. AND the Remedies against this Vice, are these: *First*, We are to keep a strict Watch over our selves, and to observe in any Christian Duty, whether we consider the Praise of Men; or in the

most indifferent Action, whether we have not an earnest Inclination to it; and if we find our selves leaning that way, we must endeavour to have a a strict Eye upon it; and whenever we find it moves, reprehend and resist it. *Secondly*, Let this be our Design, to please *God*; that when we intend any thing, we may make this inquiry, whether it hath his Approbation: and then we shall have no time to think what Praise it will bring us from Men; for it is a greater Benefit for us to please *God*, who is able to give us Eternal Rewards; than Men, whose Applauses are vain and empty; and none of us can but think it reasonable, to make the former our only Care. *Thirdly*, If at any time we receive Praise of Men, let us not be fond of it, nor think a tittle the better of our selves: If it be Virtue we are esteem'd for, we must remember it came from *God*, and return him the Glory; and not imagine any belongs to our selves. Indifferent Actions can deserve no Praise, and bad Ones ought to set us a trembling; else that Woe of our Saviour belongs to us, *Luke* 6. 26. *Woe unto you, when Men speak well of you; for so did their Fathers to the False Prophets:* and there is not a greater Appearance of an hardned Heart, than when Men make their Sins the Object of their Glory.

14. THE next Virtue is *Meekness*, which is composed of a calmness and quietness of Spirit, opposite to the Rage and Impatiences of Anger. This Virtue is a Duty to *God*, of which I have already spoken of under the Head of *Humility*; and may be exercised towards our Neighbor, and our selves: I shall begin with that towards our selves. *First*, The advantage we receive by it is this, We have the Blessing which *Christ* pronounced, *Mat.* 5. 5. *Blessed are the Meek*; not only in the World to come, but in this; *They shall inherit the Earth*: and indeed none

hath

hath a more perfect Enjoyment, than Meek Perſons: For the Impatient can never enjoy the greateſt Proſperities; and the uneaſineſs of this Paſſion is ſuch, that it raiſes Storms within their own Breaſts, and a Perturbation upon their Spirits.

15. SECONDLY, We acquire Honour by it; for we reſemble *Chriſt*, that bleſt Pattern of Meekneſs: *Learn of me*, ſaith he, *for I am meek and lowly in Heart*, Matth. 11. 28. And by it we conquer our ſelves, and our unruly Paſſions, which is the nobleſt Victory. *Thirdly*, It makes us deport our ſelves like Men, whereas Anger transforms us to the Fierceneſs and Wildneſs of Savage Beaſts: The One is eſteemed, and the Other abhorred; every one ſhunning an outragious Man, as they would a tameleſs Beaſt. Moreover, *Meekneſs* infereth a ſober Mind; whereas Anger is direct Madneſs, and renders him uncapable of being his own Maſter; exciting him to thoſe things, as himſelf, in his ſerious Temper, utterly deteſts. Many Men have committed thoſe things in their Rage, which they have repented all their Life after. Therefore, ſeeing how much Anger reſembles Beaſtiality, a mad Man than a ſober Man, let us imbrace this Vertue of *Meekneſs*, and abandon the contrary Vice of *Anger*.

16. MEEKNESS, in the next place, makes the worſt Condition tolerable and eaſie; and if we meekly bear any Suffering, it takes off the Edge, that it cannot wound us; whereas they that rage, whets it, and makes it ſharper than it would be; as in the caſe of reproachful words, which in themſelves do no prejudice to our Bodies nor Eſtates; all the miſchief they can do, is to make us angery; and then the Anger will create more Striſe and Debate, and animate the Eſpouſed Party but more againſt us: Whereas he that *Meekly* paſſes them by, is never

ver the worse but the better; for he shall be rewarded of *God* for that *Patience*: And St. *Paul* to *Titus*, gives us this Advice, *To speak Evil of no Man, to be no Brawlers, but gentle, shewing all Meekness unto all Men*, Tit. 3. 2.

16. AND the means to obtain this Vertue, are these: *First*, To make a deep Impression in our Minds, of the Loveliness and Benefits of *Meekness*, together with the Deformity and Mischief of *Anger*. *Secondly*, To set before our selves the Example of our Blessed Lord and Saviour, who indured all Reproaches and Torments, with a perfect *Patience*, that was *Led as a Sheep to the Slaughter*, Isa. 53. 7. *That when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, threatned not*, 1 Pet. 2. 23. *Thirdly*, To be very vigilant in preventing the beginnings of *Anger*; and to that end, we must mortifie all inward Peevishness and Frowardness of Mind, which is a Sin in it self, if it proceed no further; but if cherish'd, will break out into open Effects of Danger. Therefore, whenever thou find'st the least Motion of it within thee, make as much haste to check it, as thou wouldest to quench a Fire in thy House: And be sure to keep a strick watch over thy Tongue, that it break not out into any angry Expressions; for that Breath will fan the Fire, not only in thine Antagonist, but thy self too: Therefore, though thy Heart be ardent within, suffocate the Flame, that it break not out; and the greater the Temptation is, the more earnestly call upon *God* to assist thee to conquer it. *Fourthly*, Often call to mind the great Punishments thy sins have deserved; and then, whether thy Afflictions be from *God* or Man, thou wilt acknowledge them to be far short of what thou deservest; and wilt be ready to blush at thy great Impatience.

A Prayer for Meekneſs and Humility.

O Moſt Bleſſed Lord God, the Perfect Pattern of Humility and Meekneſs; infuſe into me, I humbly beſeech thee, thoſe Excellent Graces, whereby I may be fully convinced of my own Wretchedneſs, and Evidently behold that I am ſinful Duſt and Aſhes; Lord work in me ſuch a lowlineſs of Mind, that I may in the ſincerity of my Heart confeſs and acknowledge that I am leſs than the leaſt of all thy Mercies, and juſtly deſerve the greateſt of thy Judgments: Give me, O Lord, a Contrite Spirit, a Meek and an Humble Heart, and chaſe from me all Pride and Vanity of Mind, whereby I may become lowly, yea baſe and vile in my own Eyes.

2. *ROOT out, O Lord, from me all perverſeneſs of Spirit, and wholly diſpoſſeſs it of its reſidence; that I may be fit to entertain that good Spirit of thine, and thou mayſt take delight to dwell and remain with me: Grant that I may every day be more humbled with the ſight of my own Unworthineſs, and Spiritual Wants, and to eſteem my ſelf as nothing without thee, but always acknowledge my own frailty and weakneſs: O, let me wholly depend and rely upon thee, and aſcribe the Praiſe and Glory of whatſoever good is wrought in me, or by me, unto thee alone, who art the God of my Strength, the Author and Giver both of Grace and Glory, and the Beginner and Finiſher of every Good Thing, which is wrought in any of thy Servants, to whom be all Honour and Glory, now and for ever.* Amen.

SECT.

SECT. II.

In time of Sickneſs

1. WHAT ſhould we do in this Vale of Tears, but condole each others Miſeries? Every Man hath his weight, and happy is he whoſe Burthen is ſo eaſie, that he may aſſiſt his Neighbours. Many have waded through a Sea of Sorrows; and the Angel of the *Lord*, that hath Redeemed their Souls from Evil, and led them within few Paces of the Shore, offers to lend thee his Hand; to guide thee in this dangerous World, wherein every Error is Death: Let us follow him therefore with a humble Confidence, and be ſafe in the View and Pity of the woful Miſcarriages of others, and take warning by their ſad Misfortunes.

2. THOU art on thy Bed of Sickneſs, and with holy *David*, *Roaring all the day long*, Pſal. 32. 3. for the Extremity of thy pain, meaſuring the ſlow Hours, not by Minutes, but by Groans: *Thy Soul is weary of thy Life*, Job 10. 1. through the Intolerable *Anguiſh of thy Spirit*, Job 7. 11. Of all temporal Afflictions, this is the ſoreſt: And *Job* 1. 21. after the loſs of his Goods and Children, could yet ſupport himſelf, and *Bleſs the God that gives and takes*: But when his Body was tormented, and made one *Boyle*, then his *Patience* is extended ſo far, as to curſe (not his *God*, but) his Nativity, *Job* 3. 3. *Let the day periſh wherein I was born, and the night in which it was ſaid, there is a Man Child conceived.* And King *Artaxerxes* queſtioning with his Cup bearer *Nehemiah*, could ſay, *Why is thy Countenance ſad; ſeeing thou art not Sick?* Nehem. 2. 2. implyed that the Sick, of all others, hath juſt cauſe to

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be dejected. Humane Croſſes are at a diſtance, but Sickneſs is in our Boſoms: Thoſe touch Externaly, theſe Internally our Selves: Here the whole Man ſuffers. What could the Body feel without the Soul that animates it? How can the Soul (which makes the Body ſenſible) chuſe but be moſt affected with that Pain, wherewith the Body is afflicted? Both Partners are perplex'd to encounter ſo fierce an Enemy, and the ſharpeſt requires the moſt powerful Reſiſtance. Therefore let us recollect our ſelves, and ſummon all the Powers of our Souls, to engage with ſo violent, and potent an Enemy.

3. THY Body is by a ſore Diſeaſe confin'd to thy Bed: I ſhould be ſorry to ſay, thy ſelf wert ſo. Thy Soul, which is thy ſelf, I hope is at a diſtance from thee; but however it is content to take a ſhare in thy Sufferings, ſoars above to the Heaven of Heavens; and is proſtrate before the Throne of Grace, imploring for Mercy and Forgiveneſs; beholding the Face of thy Glorious Mediator, interceding for thee. Unhappy were we, if our Souls were lockt up in our Boſoms, that they could uſe no Motions, but what our lumpiſh Bodies could contribute: But, bleſſed be *God*, he hath animated us with active Spirits, that can move themſelves, while our Bodies lie ſtill; that can be ſo agil in their Motions, as they can paſs from Earth to Heaven, ere we can turn our wearied and ſick Bodies to find eaſe.

4. AND how much ſhall we be wanting to our ſelves, if we do not make uſe of this Spiritual Agility; ſending up theſe Spirits of ours, from this brittle Clay of our Bodies, to thoſe Regions of Bleſſedneſs, that they may from thence Extract Comforts to alleviate the Sorrows of their heavy Partners. Thus if thou imployeſt thy better part, no Pains of the Body can make thee miſerable, tha

that Spiritual Part of thine ſhall ere long be in Bliſs, whil'ſt this piece of Earth lies putrified in the Grave. Why doſt thou not then, even now before thy Diſſolution, improve all the Powers of it to thy preſent Advantage? Let thy internal Eye ſtill behold the Face of thy *God* in Glory, whil'ſt thy Corporal Eyes obſerve thoſe Friends at thy Bed-ſide, which may pity, but cannot help thee.

5. THOU art pained with Sickneſs: Conſider ſeriouſly from whence it comes, and what makes it ſo bitter to thee; *Affliction cometh not out of the duſt*, Job 5. 6. Couldſt thou but hear the Voice of thy Diſeaſe, as thou now feeleſt the Stroke of it, it hath proclaim'd loud enough, *Am I come up hither without the Lord, to torment thee? The Lord hath ſaid to me, Go up againſt this Man, and afflict him*, 2 Kings 18. 25. Couldſt thou perceive the Hand that ſmites thee, thou wouldſt be eager to kiſs it; ſince it is the Father of all Mercies, Comfort and Conſolation, that lays theſe Stripes upon thee: He that made thee and bought thee at ſo dear a Price as his own Blood; it is He that chaſtiſeth thee: And canſt thou think He would ſcourge thee, but for thine own Advantage: For what tender Father is there, but has Bowels of Compaſſion, and never takes the Rod in hand, out of a Pleaſure to chaſten that Fleſh, which is derived from his own Loyns? Or is it any eaſe to him, to make his Child ſmart and bleed? But rather himſelf ſuffers more than he inflicts, and would be content to Redeem thoſe Stripes with his own; yet he ſees the Chaſtiſement proper, not to ſpare him for his Frowardneſs, and Tears; but will plead, he had not lov'd him, if he had not been ſo kindly ſevere: And *Solomon* gives us this advice; *Chaſten thy Son while there is Hope, and let not thy Soul ſpare for his Crying*, Prov. 19. 18. And if we that are evil, know how to give loving and

and beneficial Correction to our Children, how much more ſhall our Father which is in Heaven, know how to Chaſtiſe us for our Advantage? So as we may ſing under the Rod, with the Bleſſed Pſalmiſt; *I know, O Lord, that thy Judgments are right, and that thou in Faithfulneſs haſt afflicted me,* Pſal. 119. 75. Might a Child be made Arbiter of his Chaſtiſement, do we think he would adjudicate himſelf to be Corrected? Yet the diſcreet Parent knows he ſhall wrong him, if he give not due Correction; as having learned of wiſe *Solomon,* Prov. 23. 14. *Thou ſhalt beat him with the Rod, and ſhalt deliver his Soul from Hell.* Love hath its Stroaks, ſaith St. *Ambroſe,* which are the ſweeter, the harder they are inflicted.

5. DOST thou not remember the Meſſage the two Siſters ſent to our Saviour, John 11. 3. *Lord, behold he whom thou loveſt, is Sick.* Were it ſo, that Pain or Sickneſs, or any of the Executioners of Divine Juſtice, ere let looſe to tyrannize over thee at Pleaſure, to render thee perfectly Miſerable; there were juſt Reaſon for thy utter Diffidence: But they are ſtinted, and march under Comiſſion; neither can they be allowed to have any other Limits than thy own Advantage. Hadſt thou rather be Good, or be Healthful, I know thou wouldſt imbrace both, and think thy ſelf in a happy State: For who is ſo little in his own favour, as to imagine he can be the worſe for faring well. But he that made thee, has a far greater Inſpection into thee, than thine own Eyes can have; he ſees thy Vigor is turning wanton, and if thy Body be not ſick, thy Soul will: If he therefore think it fit to take down thy worſt part a little, for the preventing of a Mortal Danger to the better, what cauſe haſt thou to complain, yea, rather not to be thankful? When thou haſt felt thy Body in a diſtemper

ſtemper of Fulneſs, thou haſt gone to Sea on purpoſe to create a Sickneſs; yet thou kneweſt that turning of thy Head and Stomach would be more painful to thee, than thy former Indiſpoſition. Why then ſhould not thy All-wiſe Creator take Liberty to Cure thee with an Afflictious Remedy.

7. THOU art now Sick: Wert thou not a long time Healthful, and canſt thou not take that *patiently* which *God* hath allotted thee? If thou haſt enjoy'd more dayes of health, than hours of ſickneſs, how canſt thou think thou hadſt cauſe to repine? Had the Divine Wiſdom thought fit to mitigate thy many days pain, with the Eaſe of one hour, it had been worthy of thy Thanks: But now that he hath requited thy few painful hours, with years of perfect health, how unthankfully doſt thou repine at thy Condition? It was a groſs miſtake, if thou didſt not from all Earthly things expect a Viciſſitude: They cannot have their Being without a Change; as well may Day be without a Succeſſion of Night, and Life without Death, as a Mortal Body without Fits of Diſtemper: And how much better are theſe momentary Changes, than that laſt Change of a Miſery unchangeable? It was a deplorable Word that Father *Abraham* ſaid to the Rich Glutton; *Son, remember that thou in thy Life time receiveſt thy good things, and* Lazarus *evil things; but now he is Comforted and thou art Tormented*, Luke 16. 25. How happy then are we, that are here chaſtned of the *Lord*, that *We may not be Condemned of the World!* O then, welcome Feavers, and all other Diſeaſes of the Body, that may quit my Soul from Everlaſting Burnings!

8. THOU complaineſt of Sickneſs; and many have effuſed Tears for their ſuperfluity of Health; condoling the fear and danger of loſing God's Favour, for their not being Afflicted. *Bro-*

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Bromiard tells us of a Devout Man, that complained at his Proſperity, as no ſmall Affliction; whom *God* ſoon after accommodated with Pain enough, according to his Deſires: The poor Man was joyful at this Change, and look'd upon his Sickneſs as a Mercy; for ſo it was intended by him that ſent it. Why are we too much dejected with that, which others complain the want of? Why ſhould we find that ſo tedious to our ſelves, which others have wiſh'd to enjoy? There have been Medicinal Agues, which the wiſe Phyſician have caſt his Patient into, for the Cure of a worſe Diſtemper. A ſecure and illegal Health, however Nature takes it, is the moſt dangerous Indiſpoſition of the Soul: If that be healed by ſome few bodily Pangs, the advantage is unſpeakable. Look upon ſome vigorous Gallant, that in the height of his Spirit, and heat of Blood, eagerly purſues his Carnal Delights, thinking of no Heaven, but the free delectation of his Senſe; and compare thy preſent Eſtate with his: Here thou lieſt groaning and ſighing, panting and ſhifting thy weary Sides, complaining of the ſlow motions of thy tedious Hours; whilſt he is frolicking with his jocund Companions, Carouſing his large Healths, ſporting himſelf with his wanton *Delilah*, and bathing himſelf in all ſenſual Pleaſures: And tell me whether of the two thou thinkſt in the happier Condition? If thou art not ſhrunk into nothing but Senſe, and haſt not caſt off all Thoughts of another World, thou wouldſt pity the Miſery of that Atheiſtical Jollity, and gratulate to thy ſelf the advantage of thy humble and faithful ſuffering, that, which will at laſt make thee ample Satisfaction, by yielding thee *the peaceable Fruit of Righteouſneſs*, Heb. 12. 11.

9. THY Pain is grievous; but doſt thou not hear the great precedent of *Patience* crying out from his Dunghil, *O that my Grief were throughly weighed, and my Calamities laid in the Ballance together! For now it would be heavier than the Sand of the Sea: Therefore my words are ſwallowed up; for the Arrows of the Almighty are within me, the Poyſon whereof drinketh up my Spirits: The Terrors of God do ſet themſelves in Array againſt me,* Job 6. 2, 3, 4. Doſt thou not hear the Man after God's own Heart ſpeak of *the Voice of his Roaring*, Pſal. 22. 1? He that ſhrunk not from the Bear, the Lyon, nor *Goliah* of *Gath*, is now *drenching his Bed with his Tears*. Pſal. 6. 6. Doſt thou not hear the Faithful crying out, *I am the Man that hath ſuffered Affliction by the Rod of his Wrath*, &c. *Surely againſt me he is turned; he turneth his hand againſt me all the day; my Fleſh and my Skin hath he made old; he hath broken my Bones*, Lam. 3. 1, 3, 4. Conſider the *Prophets*, *Apoſtles* and *Martyrs*, the great Favourites of Heaven; ſome on *Gridirons*, others in *Boyling Caldrons*; ſome on *Spits*, others under *Saws*; ſome in *Flames*; others craſhed with the *Teeth* of *Wild Beaſts*; ſome on *Racks*, others in *Fiery Furnaces*: Moſt of 'em in ſuch Torments, as in compariſon, thy Pains are but a Sport. But to leave Mortality and ſinful Duſt and Aſhes, thou may'ſt behold the *Son* of *God*, and *Lord* of *Life*, the *King* of *Glory*, *God* bleſſed for ever, ſweating drops of *Blood* in his dreadful *Agony*; and mayſt hear him cry upon the Tree of Curſe and Shame, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* Matth. 27. 46. Alas, What are we capable to ſuffer, in proportion of theſe Tortures? What are we, that we ſhould think much to ſhare with the beſt of *God*'s Saints; nay, even with the dear and eternal Son of his Love, our ever bleſſed Redeemer? Had

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not God preſcribed this their way to Heaven, they had not waded ſo deep in Blood.

10. WHY do we repine to wet our feet where they waded? If from theſe Holy Ones we turn our Eyes, we ſhall find Examples among meer Pagans: For inſtance, He who we uſed to account infamous for Voluptuouſneſs, *Epicurus* the Philoſopher; who, on his Dying-day, when he lay extreamly tormented with the *Stone* in the *Bladder*, and a tearing *Cholick* in his *Bowels*, as it were graſping for Life; yet even then, writing to his *Idomeneus*, can out of the ſtrength of his Reſolutions, profeſs his Cheerfulneſs, and can ſtile even that day Bleſſed. It was the ſame Mouth that could boaſt, that if he were frying in the *Brazen Bull* of *Phalaris*, he could there find Contentment. What ſhould I tell thee of a *Mutius Scævola*, who in a Glorious Revenge, voluntarily burnt off his Right Hand, not without the Envy and Pity of his Enemies; or of a *Regulus*, that after ſo high a Provocation, offers himſelf to the worſt of the mercileſs Fury of his Tormenters? Why ſhouldſt thou admire, ſaith wiſe *Seneca*, that ſome ſhould be well pleaſed to be Scorch'd, Wounded, Rack'd, or Kill'd? Frugality is a pain to the Riotous, Labour a puniſhment to the Lazy, Continence a miſery to the Wanton, and Study a torture to the Sloathful.

11. ALL theſe are not in their own Nature difficult, but we are infirm and inconſtant. Shall *Pagans* attain to this height of Magnanimity by their Fortitude! And ſhall we Chriſtians droop under gentler Sufferings! We profeſs the advantage of Faith to uphold and chear us: But poor *Ethnick* Souls! they never heard of a Merciful God to Comfort 'em: They never knew thoſe ſweet Meſſages from Heaven, *Call upon me in the day of Trouble, I*

will deliver thee, and thou ſhalt Glorifie me, Pſal. 50. 15. *Come unto me all ye that Labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you Reſt*, Matth. 11. 28. *Strengthen ye the weak Hands, and confirm the feeble Knees: Say to them that are of a fearful Heart, Be ſtrong, fear not, behold, your God will come with Vengeance, even God with a Recompence: He will come and ſave you*, Iſa. 35. 3, 4. They had not the Heart of a *Job*, to ſay, *I know that my Redeemer liveth*, Job 19. 25. Nor the Eyes of a *Stephen*, to pierce the Heavens, to ſee their *Saviour ſtanding at the Right hand of God*: But out of their Vigour elevated with an arrogant Ambition of that Fame which they believed, would ſurvive 'em: Whereas, we *Chriſtians* know that we have the Father of Mercies to ſtand by us; a Redeemer to deliver us, a Comforter to ſtrengthen and refreſh us, ſweet and infallible Promiſes to ſuſtain us: And at laſt, a Crown of Eternal Glory to reward us.

12. THOU art pained with Sickneſs: View not what thou feeleſt, but think what Puniſhment thou haſt deſerved: *Wherefore doth a living Man complain, a Man for the puniſhment of his Sin?* Lam. 3. 39. Alas, the *Wages of* every *Sin, is Death*, a Death of Body and Soul, Temporal and Eternal: Any thing below this, is Mercy. There is not the leaſt of thy Tranſgreſſions but hath merited the infinite wrath of a juſt *God*, and more Torments than thou art able to undergo. What, doſt thou complain of Eaſe? Where thou oweſt a thouſand Talents, thou art bid to *Take thy Bill, and write down Fifty*, Luke 16. 6. Wilt thou not magnifie the Clemency of ſo favourable a Creditor? Surely, were every Twig which creates a Smart, a Scorpion, and every Breath thou ſendeſt forth, a Flame: This were yet leſs than thy Deſerts. Oh, the infinite goodneſs of our Indulgent Father, that

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uſes ſo gentle a Correction to us! Tell me thou nice Patient, if thou canſt not ſuffer theſe Stripes, how thou wilt endure thoſe that are infinitely ſharper? Alas! What are theſe Trifles to that Hell which abides for the Impatient? There are Torments without Mitigation; eternal Pains without Intermiſſion; which thou can'ſt not ſuffer, nor avoid: Fear them, and murmur not at theſe; proſtrate thy ſelf low under the hand of *God*, and be thankful for a tolerable Miſery. How graciouſly hath the Wiſdom of *God* thought fit to temper our Afflictions, if they prove ſharp, they are not long, and if long, not over ſharp; that our Strength might not be depreſſed by thoſe Trials we undergo. Therefore aſpire a Contentment in thy ſelf, and thy Languiſhment will be eaſie, or thy Pain ſoon over. Extream and Everlaſting are Terrors reſerv'd for the Wicked hereafter, that are durable, painful, and not capable of any Relaxation. What a Moment is it that thou doſt ſuffer? Yea, nothing, in reſpect of Eternity, which thou muſt either hope for, or fear. Endure a while *patiently*, that thou mayſt not be infinitely Miſerable.

13. THOU complaineſt of Pain: Of what uſe were thy Patience if that were mitigated? *God* never gives Vertues without an intent of their Exerciſe. To what end were our Chriſtian Valour, if we had no Enemy to Encounter? Thus long thou haſt ſupinely ſlept in a ſecure Gariſon, where thou haſt heard no Trumpet, but thine own, and haſt turned thy Drum-head into a Table for Dice, laviſhing out thy days in varieties of idle Recreations: Now *God* draws thee forth to the Field, and ſhews the an Enemy; where is thy Chriſtian Fortitude if thou recoileſt, and chuſeſt rather to fly than reſiſt? And is this a proper Character for thee,

who profeſeſt to fight under his Banner, who is the Conqueror of Death and Hell? Is this the way to that happy Victory, and to acquire a Crown of Glory? If thou faint in the day of Adverſity, thy Strength is but ſmall: *Be ſtrong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might*, Epheſ. 6. 10. Encounter with that fierce Enemy, wherewith *God* would have thee aſſaulted; look up to him, who hath ſaid, and cannot fail to perform it; *Be faithful to the Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life*, Rev. 2. 10.

14. THOU art ſurpriz'd with Sickneſs; accuſe thy ſelf for it; Who forbid thee expecting ſo ſure a Gueſt? Thy Frame of Body ſhould have prompted thee to other Thoughts: Doſt thou perceive this living Fabrick made up as a Clock, conſiſting of many Wheels? and imagine that ſome of 'em ſhoud not be ever out of order? Couldſt thou think that a Cottage not ſtrongly built, and ſtanding ſo bleak in the very Mouth of the Winds, could for ever hold firm and ſtrong? Or art thou not amazed it hath out-ſtood ſo many bluſt'ring Blaſts, utterly unruined? It was ſcarce a *patient* Queſtion, which *Job* asked; *Is my Strength the Strength of Stones? or is my Fleſh as Braſs?* Job 6. 12. Alas! thy beſt Metal is but Clay, and fading Fleſh, is but Graſs; the Clay mouldereth, and the Graſs withereth. Why do we reckon of any thing, but Miſery and Fickleneſs in this woful Region of Change? If we will needs over-reckon our Condition, we do but aſſiſt to aggravate our own Wretchedneſs.

15. THOU art retir'd to thy ſick Bed, be of good Comfort, God was never ſo near thee, never ſo indulgent to thee as now. *The Whole*, ſaith our Saviour, *needs not a Phyſician, but they that are Sick*, Mat. 9. 12. The *Phyſician* cometh not but where there is neceſſity, and where that is, will not fail to come: Our Wants is motive enough to *Him*, who

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took our Infirmities, and bare our Sickneſſes, Mat. 8. 17. Our Health alienates him from us; but whilſt thou art his *Patient*, he cannot be from thee. *The Lord*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *will ſtrengthen thee upon the Bed of Languiſhing, thou wilt make all his Bed in his Sickneſs*, Pſal. 41. 3. The Comforter doth not only viſit, but attend thee: If thou find thy Bed uneaſie, he will ſoften it for thy Repoſe. Canſt thou not read God's Indulgence in thine own Diſpoſition? Thou art a Parent; Perhaps thou affecteſt one Child more than another, though all dear enough: But if any of them be caſt down, thou art more careful about that than the reſt: How thou pitieſt and plieſt it with Offers and Receipts? With what ſilent Anxiety doſt thou watch by it, liſtning for every Breathing, jealous of every whiſpering, that might break its Slumber, reſponding its Groans with Sighs; and, in fine, taking ſuch Care that thy greateſt Darling ſeems the while neglected, in compariſon of this under Affliction. *How* much more ſhall the Father of Mercies, be compaſſionately Intent upon the Sufferings of his dear Children, according to the Proportion of their Afflictions?

16. **THOU** art wholly entertain'd with the Extremity of thy pains: Alas, poor Soul! Thy dimneſs perceives nothing, but what is near thee: It is thy ſenſe which thou followeſt, but where is thy Faith? Couldſt thou inſpect the end of thy Sufferings, thou wouldſt rejoyce in Tribulation: *Let Patience have her perfect Work*; and thou ſhalt once ſay, It is good for me that I was afflicted. Thou mightèſt be jocund long enough, ere thy Jollity could make thee happy: *Yea, Woe to them that laugh here*, Luke 6. 25. But, on the contrary, *Our light Affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of Glory*, 2 Cor. 4. 17. O bleſſed improvement of a few Groans! Oh

glorious Iſſue of a ſhort Storm of Sorrow! Why do we imitate Chriſtians, if nothing but Fleſh and Blood? And if better, we have more cauſe of Joy, than Complaint; for whil'ſt our *Outward Man periſheth, our Inward Man is renewed dayly*, 2 Cor. 4. 16. Our External Man is Fleſh, our Internal is Spirit; infinitely more noble, than this living Clay that we carry about us. Whil'ſt our Spirit gains more than our Fleſh is capable to loſe, what reaſon have we not to boaſt of the Bargain? Let not then theſe cloſe Curtains confine thy ſight, but lift up thine Eyes to Heaven, whence thy Soul came, and view there that Crown of Glory, which thy *God* holds forth to all that overcome: And then *Run with Patience the Race that is ſet before thee; looking unto* Jeſus, *the Author and Finiſher of our Faith, who is ſet down at the Right Hand of the Throne of God*, Heb. 12. 1, 2. Then chear thy ſelf with the Expectation of that Bleſſedneſs, which if thy Torments were no leſs than thoſe of Hell, would make more than ample Amends for all thy Sufferings.

17. THOU art ſick to Death: And haſt received the Sentence of Mortality in thy ſelf; thy Phyſician hath given the up to act the laſt Scene: Neither art thou like to riſe till the General Reſurrection: How many are lately expired, that would have thought it a great happineſs to die thus quietly in their Beds? Whom Storms of War hath hurried away furiouſly into another World; not ſuffering them to take leave of that Life, which they were forced to abandon: Whereas thou haſt leiſure to prepare thy ſelf for the Entertainment of thy laſt Gueſt; *to ſet both thine Houſe in order*, and thy Soul. It is no diſadvantage to thee, thus to behold Death at a diſtance, and to obſerve every one of his Paces towards thee; that thou mayſt put thy ſelf into a fit Poſture to meet this grim Meſſenger who Uſhers

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thee to Immortality; that dying thus by Degrees, thou haſt leiſure, with the Patriarch *Jacob*, to Summon thy Children, to bequeath them thy laſt Benediction; and being encompaſſed with thy ſad Friends, now in thy long Journey to a far Country, thou mayſt take a Solemn Farewell, as going ſomewhat before them to the appointed happy Meeting-place of Bleſſedneſs: And laſtly, That one of thine own may cloſe thoſe Eyes, which ſhall in their opening, ſee the Face of thy moſt Glorious *Saviour*; and ſee this Fleſh, now ready to lye down in Corruption, made like to his unſpeakable Glory.

A Prayer for a Sick Perſon.

O *Moſt Gracious, and Merciful Lord God, the only Author of our Health and Being; thou caſteſt us down upon our Beds of Sickneſs, and ſometimes draws the Curtain between the World and us: O Lord, my time is in thy hand; and I know not how ſoon my change which thou haſt appointed ſhall be; whether this Week, this Day, this Hour, yea, or this very Moment. O Lord, ſanctifie unto me this thy preſent Viſitation, which my Sins have long ſince deſerved; heal my Soul, which in great bitterneſs hath ſinned againſt thee, and then if it ſtand with thy good Pleaſure, heal my Body, and raiſe it, that I may glorifie thy Holy Name in the Congregation of the Righteous.*

2. *BUT if in thy Omniſcency thou haſt otherwiſe determined, that this Viſitation ſhall put a period to my frail Mortality; I humbly beſeech thee, to fit and prepare me for that laſt and great change: Wean me from all the fading pleaſures and vain allurements of this ſinful World, that I may become a meet partaker of thy Heavenly Kingdom: Send down, O Lord, thy Light and thy*

thy Truth into my inward parts, that I may underſtand thy Wiſdom ſecreetly: Support the weakneſs of my Faith, that I may with a ſtrong Aſſurance lay hold upon the Blood of Jeſus, by whoſe Merits I expect Salvation, and to Reign with thee in thy Heavenly Kingdom. Amen.

SECT. III.

Affliction of Conſcience.

1. THY *Sin* is ponderous upon thy *Soul*: Bleſs the Omnipotence, thou art ſenſible of it. Many hath more weight, and boaſteth of Eaſe. There's Muſick in this Complaint; the Almighty delights to hear it, next to the Melody of Saints and Angels. Purſue and continue theſe ſorrowful Notes, if ever thou expecteſt Comfort. *It is this Godly Sorrow, that worketh Repentance to Salvation, not to be repented of,* 2 Cor. 7. 10. Weep ſtill and be not too much haſty to exhauſt thy Tears; for they are precious, and rendred fit to be reſerv'd in the *Bottle of the Almighty*, Pſal. 56.8. Over-ſpeedy Remedies may prove injurious to the Patient: And as in the Body, ſo in the Soul; Diſeaſes and Tumours muſt have their due Maturation, 'ere there can be a Cure. *The Inwards of the Sacrifice muſt be three times rinſed with Water*, Lev. 1. 9. One Ablution will not ſerve turn. But when thou haſt Evacuated thine Eyes of Tears, and unloaded thy Breaſt of leiſurely Sighs, I ſhall then, by full Commiſſion from him that hath the Power of Remiſſion, ſay to thee; *Son, be of good Comfort, thy Sins are forgiven thee*, Mat. 9. 2.

2. THINK not this Word meerly formal, and forceleſs: *He that hath the Keys of Hell, and of Death*, Rev. 1. 18. hath not ſaid in vain, *Whoſe Sins*

ye

ye remit, they are remitted, John 20. 23. The Words of his Vicegerents on Earth, are ratified in Heav'n; only the *Prieſt* under the Law, hath power to pronounce the *Leper* clean, *Lev.* 13. 3. Had any other *Iſraelite* done it, it had been as unprofitable, as preſumptuons. It was a good Expreſſion that fell from *Elihu*; When a Man's *Soul draweth nigh unto the Grave, and his Life to the Deſtroyer, if there be a Meſſenger* (of God) *with him, an Interpreter, one among a thouſand, to ſhew unto that Man his Uprightneſs; then He* (*i. e.* God) *is Gracious unto him, and ſaith, Deliver him from going down into the Pit; I have found a Ranſom,* Job 33. 22, 23, 24. Behold! this is thy State, thy Souls Life is in danger of the Deſtroyer, through his powerful Temptations: I am (howſoever unworthy) a Meſſenger ſent to thee from Heaven; and in the Name of the Almighty that ſent me, do here upon thy ſerious Repentance, before *Angels* and *Men*, proclaim thy Soul fix'd in the Court of Heaven: The Invaluable Ranſon of thy dear Saviour is accepted for thee; ſo thou art deliver'd from deſcending into the Pit of Perdition.

3. O H, happy Meſſage, thou replyeſt, were it receiv'd with Comfort! But, Alas! my heart is poſſeſt with deep Grounds of Fear and Diffidence, not eaſily to be remov'd: That convicts me, whil'ſt you offer to acquit me; and poſitively acquaints me, I am a worſe Criminal, than a Spectator can imagine: My Sins are beyond meaſure hainous, ſuch as my Thoughts tremble at; and Tongue dare not expreſs to *God* that knows 'em, againſt whom only they are committed. If there is Horror in their very Remembrance; what will their be then in their Retribution?

4. T H E Y are bitter things thou urgeſt againſt thy ſelf; no Adverſary could plead worſe: But I admit thy vileneſs; be thou as wicked as *Satan* can

make

make thee: It is not his Malice, or thy Wickedneſs, that can exclude thee from Mercy: Be thou as forbid as Sin can expoſe thee, yet *There is a Fountain opened to the Houſe of* David, Zach. 13. 1. (a bloody Fountain in the Side of thy Saviour) *for Sin, and for Uncleanneſs.* Be thou as Leprous as that *Syrian* was of old, 2 *King.* 5. 18. if thou canſt but *Waſh ſeven times* in the *Waters* of this *Jordan*, thou wilt be clean; *Thy Fleſh ſhall come again to thee, like to the Fleſh of a little Child:* Thou ſhalt be at once ſound and innocent. Be thou ſtung with the Fiery Serpents of this Wilderneſs; yet if thou caſt thine Eyes to that *Brazen Serpent* erected for thy Malady, thou wilt find Cure. Wherefore came *Chriſt* into the World, but to ſave Sinners? Add, if thou wilt, *Whereof I am Chief,* 1 Tim. 1. 15. Thou canſt alledge no worſe by thy ſelf, than the beſt did before thee; who, in the Right of a Sinner, claimeth the Benefit of a Saviour.

5. WERE it not for Sin, what uſe were there of a Redeemer? Were not Sin hainous, how ſhould it require ſuch an Expiation, as the Blood of *Chriſt*? The magnitude of thy Sins, merits but to magnifie the Mercy of the Forgiver: To remit the Debt of Farthings, were inſignificant; but to forgive thouſands of Talents, is the height of Bounty. Thus *God* deals with thee: He permits thee to run on to ſo deep a Sum, that when thy Conſcious heart hath proclaim'd thee a Bankrupt, he may infinitely oblige thee, and glorifie his own Mercy, in croſſing the Reckoning, and acquitting thy Soul. All Sums are equally diſchargable to the Munificence of our Great Creditor in Heav'n: As it is the Act of his Juſtice, to expect the leaſt; ſo it is of his Mercy to forgive the Greateſt. Had we to do with a Finite Power, we might ſink under the Burthen of our Sins: But having an Infinite Power to attend

us,

us, let thy Care be to lay hold on that Infinite Bounty; and as thou art an Object of Mercy, ſinful, and miſerable enough; ſo conclude thy ſelf (as thou art) a Subject proper to receive it as a Penitent Believer. Open and enlarge thy Boſom, and aſſume this Free Grace, and cloſe with thy Bleſſed Saviour; and in him, poſſeſs thy ſelf of Remiſſion, Peace and Salvation.

6. COMFORTABLE Expreſſions, thou confeſſeſt, to thoſe that are capable of them: But what is this to me, that am neither Penitent nor Believer? Alas! That which is Honey to others, is Gall and Wormwood to me; who want the Grace to Repent, and Believe as I ought. Why art thou ſo imprudent and unjuſt, as to conſpire with *Satan* againſt thy own Soul? Why wilt thou be ſo unthankfully injurious to the *God* of Mercies, as to deny thoſe Graces which his good Spirit hath beſtowed upon thee? If thou wert not penitent, why are theſe Tears? What means theſe Sighs and Paſſionate Expreſſions of Sorrow, which thou uttereſt? It is no Temporal Loſs that afflicts thee; nor Corporal Diſtemper that thus diſquiets thee: Doubtleſs, thou art Soul-ſick, thy Spirit is wounded within thee; and what can thus affect thy Soul, but ſin? Or what can this Affection of thy Soul be for Sin, but true Penitence?

7. THOU repliedſt; I am indeed ſorrowful for Sin, but not upon the right Grounds: I grieve for the miſery that Sin hath brought upon me, not for the evil of Sin, but for the Puniſhment, not the Offence; for my Peril, not for the diſpleaſure of my *God*. Beware, leſt an undue Humility cauſe thee falſely to accuſe the Graces of God's Spirit: Thou art no competent Judge, whilſt thou art under Temptations. Had not thy Sorrow a relation to God, why wouldſt thou Sigh

to Heaven? Why would thy Heart challenge thee for unkindneſs in Offending? And to cry out of the Sordidneſs not of the Peril of thy Sin? What renders the act of thy Sin to be ſinful, but the offence againſt the Divine Majeſty? How canſt thou be ſorry that thou haſt Sinned, and not be ſorry that thou haſt Offended? Tell me, What is it thy Conſcience primarily ſuggeſts to thee in this impreſſion of thy Sorrow? Is it thou ſhalt be Puniſh'd, or that thou haſt Sinned? And were it put to thy Choice, Whether thou hadſt rather enjoy the Favour of God with extremity of Pain, or continue in his Diſpleaſure with Eaſe? Or if Liberty were tendred to thee, that thou mightſt freely ſin without danger of Puniſhment? Whether doth not thy Heart riſe at the Condition, as ready to flie in the Face of the Offerer? Beſides Fear and Horror, doſt thou not find an internal Indignation at thy Miſcarriage, and ſuch a deteſtation of thy Sin, that were it to be reiterated if it were poſſible to be concealed from God and Men, and if there were no Hell to avenge it, wouldſt thou not abhor to commit it? All theſe are ſtrong Convictions of the right grounds of thy Repentance, and of the injury which thou doſt thy Soul, in the unjuſt Scruples which thou raiſeſt againſt it.

8. IF the grounds (thou ſay'ſt) of my Repentance be regular, yet the meaſure is Inſufficient. I am ſorrowful for Sin, but not enough: An effectual grief for ſin, ſhould be ſerious, deep, hearty, intenſive; mine is ſlight and ſuperficial. I Sigh, but my Sighs proceed not from an humble Heart: I can ſometimes Weep, but cannot pour out my ſelf in Tears: I mourn, but don't continue my Sorrow. To this I *Anſwer*, Thou haſt to do with a God, which in all the diſpoſitions of thy Soul, regards Validity, and not Quantity

tity: If he find thy Remorſe, he exacts not the ſolid Meaſure: He doth not meet up our Repentance by Inches or Hours, but where he finds ſincerity of Penitence, is Indulgent. Look upon *David*, and acknowledge his Sin formidably deteſtable, no leſs than *Adultery*, *Inebriation* and *Murder*: Yet no ſooner did he in a true Compunction of Heart, cry out, *I have ſinned againſt the Lord*; then he hears from that Mouth which accuſed him; *The Lord alſo hath put away thy Sin, thou ſhalt not die*, 2 Sam. 12, 13. Here is a penitent Confeſſion, which was efficacious in the Expiation of thoſe grievous Crimes. Thou art deceived if thou imagineſt *God* delights in the Affliction of his Creatures: So far only is the grief of his Servants pleaſing to him, that it may conduce to the health of their Souls, in the ſenſibleneſs of their Sin, and meet capacity of Mercy.

9. I do not, with ſome Caſuiſts, flatter thee with an Opinion of the ſufficiency of any ſlight Attrition and empty wiſhes, that thou haſt not Sinned; doubtleſs a true Contrition of Spirit, and Compunction of Heart, are neceſſarily required to a ſaving Repentance: And theſe, wert thou but an indifferent Cenſurer of thine own ways, thou would'd find within thy ſelf. Why is thy Countenance ſo dejected, thy Cheeks pale, and watered ſo oft with Tears, thy want of Reſt, and loſs of Appetite? Wherefore doſt thou pour out thoſe doleful Complaints and vehement Deprecations? But after all this, art thou ſuch as thou accuſeſt thy ſelf, defective in thy *Repentance*? Doſt thou reſt contented in this condition, and not complain of it as the greateſt Miſery? Art thou not heartily ſorry that thou canſt be no more grieved for thy Sin? Comfort thy ſelf, even this is an acceptable *Repentance*, and God accepts it. What is *Repen-*

tance

tance but a change from Evil to Good? And how ſenſible is this Change, that thou who formerly delightedſt in thy Sin, now dereſts it and thy ſelf for it; and art yet ambitious of more Grief, for being tranſported into it? Let not thy Souls Enemy, who deſires nothing more than to make thee perfectly Miſerable, ſo allure thee, as to render thee unſatisfied with the Meaſure of that Penitency which is accepted of *God*: Rather turn thine Eyes from thy Sins, and look to Heaven and fix 'em upon thine All-ſufficient Mediator, and behold his Face ſmiling upon thy humbled Soul, and perfectly reconciling thee to his Eternal Father, as being fully aſſured, *That being juſtified by Faith, we have Peace with God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom alſo we have acceſs by Faith into this Grace wherein we ſtand, and rejoice in the hope of the Glory of God, Rom.* 5. 1, 2.

10. THERE thou ſay'ſt is the very root of my Complaint: I want that *Faith* that ſhould give me an intereſt in my Saviour, and afford true Comfort to my Soul, and *Boldneſs and Acceſs with Confidence*, to the Throne of Grace, *Epheſ.* 3. 12. I can be ſorry, but cannot believe; my Grief is not ſo great as my Infidelity: I ſee others full of *Joy and Peace in believing*, Rom. 15. 13. But my ſtubborn Heart cannot ſoar up to a conformable apprehenſion of my Saviour: So as indeed I dwell in obdurate Darkneſs, and a ſad ponderoſity of Incredulity, wanting that Aſſurance which others profeſs to find in themſelves. Take heed, leſt whilſt thou art too querulous, thou prove unthankful; and whilſt thy Humbleneſs diſparages thee, thou make God a Loſer. A Man may have a rich Mine in his Ground which he knows not of, and there are Shells furniſh'd with Pearls, whoſe Worth many are not ſenſible of. This is thy State: Thou haſt

hast that Grace thou complainest to want; and there is no measuring of thy self by Sense, especially in the time of Temptation. Thou coulst not so sensibly lament the want of Faith, if thou hadst it not. Thou canst not deny an Assent to the verity of all *God*'s Promises: Thou acknowledgst he could not be what he is, if he were not even Verity it self. Thou canst not doubt but he hath made those promises of Grace and Mercy to all Penitent Sinners, which tend to their Salvation; and thou canst not but grant, thou art sinful enough to need Mercy, and sorrowful enough to desire and Embrace it.

11. CANST thou but love thy self so well, that when thou seest a Pardon held forth to stretch forth thy Hand, and take it? This Hand is thy *Faith*, which takes hold of thy Redeemer. As for that Assurance thou mentions, they are happy that can feel and maintain it; and it must be our holy Ambition to be diligent in the Aspiration: But such a height of Perfection, every Traveller in this wretched Pilgrimage, cannot whilst he is in this perplexed and heavy Road, hope to attain to. It is an unsafe and dangerous Path, which those Men have walked in, who have used to define all Faith by Assurance. Should I conduct thee that way, it might be prejudicial. So sure a Certainty of our constant and reflected apprehension of Eternal Life, is both hard to acquire, and not easie to hold unmovably, considering the many strong Temptations that we are subject to in this Vale of Misery and Death. Should Faith be reduced to this Trial, it would be more rare than our *Saviour* hath foretold it: For as many boasts of such an Assurance, who is yet failing of a true Faith, embracing a vain Presumption instead of it: So many also hath true Faith in the Lord *Jesus*, who yet complains to want that Assu-

rance. Canſt thou in a ſenſe of thine own Miſery cloſe with thy *Saviour*? Canſt thou throw thy ſelf into the Arms of his Mercy? Canſt thou truſt him with thy Soul, and relie upon him for Forgiveneſs and Salvation? Canſt thou proſtrate thy ſelf before him, as a miſerable Object of his Grace and Mercy? And when it is offered thee, canſt lay ſome (tho weak) hold upon it? Labour for further degrees of Strength daily. Set not up thy Reſt in this pitch of Grace, but cheer up thy ſelf, and thus much Faith ſhall ſave thy Soul. Thou believeſt, and he hath ſaid it, that is Verity it ſelf, *He that believeth on the Son, hath Everlaſting Life*, Joh. 3. 36.

12. I know, thou averreſt that *Jeſus Chriſt* came into the World to ſave Sinners; and that *Whoever believeth on him, ſhall not Periſh, but have eternal Life*, Joh. 3. 15. Neither can I deny, but in a ſenſe of my ſinful Condition, I caſt my ſelf in ſome meaſure upon my *Saviour*, and lay hold upon his All-ſufficient Redemption: But, Alas! My apprehenſions of him are ſo weak, that they can afford no Comfort to my Soul. Were it not that thou expecteſt to be Juſtified, and ſaved by the power and act of thy Faith, thou haſt reaſon to be deſheartened with the imbecility of it: But now, that the Vertue and Efficacy of this happy Operation is in the Object apprehended by thee, which is the infinite Merits and Mercy of thy *Saviour*, that cannot be abated by thine Infirmities, thou haſt reaſon cheerfully to expect thy Salvation. Underſtand thy caſe aright: Here's a double Hand that helps thee towards Heaven; thy hand of Faith lays hold on thy *Saviour*: Thy *Saviour*'s hand of Mercy and plentious Redemption, lays on thee; thy hold of him is feeble and eaſily looſed; his hold of thee is ſtrong and irreſiſtable. Comfort thy ſelf therefore with the bleſſed Apoſtle; when thou art

Weak

Weak, then thou art *Strong*; when weak in thy ſelf, then ſtrong in thy Redeemer. Shouldſt thou boaſt and ſay, Tuſh, I ſhall never be moved; I ſhould ſuſpect the Verity and Safety of thy Condition. Now thou deploreſt thy Weakneſs, I cannot but Congratulate the happy Eſtate of thy Soul. If a greater Work were expedient, ſtrength of Hand were neceſſary: But now only receiving of a precious Gift is required, why may not a weak Hand perform that as well as a ſtrong, tho not ſo forcibly? Be not dejected with Impotency, but comfort thy ſelf in the Mercies of thy Redeemer.

13. THOU expreſſeſt; Sometimes, I find my heart at eaſe, in a comfortable Reliance on my *Saviour*; and being well reſolv'd of the ſafety of my State, promiſe good days to my ſelf; and after the baniſhment of my former Fears, dare bid defiance to Temptations: But, Alas! how ſoon is this ſerenity over? How ſuddenly is this clear Skie clouded, ſpread over with obſcurity, and I return to my former Deſpondency? Did'ſt thou conceive, that Grace would put thee into a conſtant and perpetual invariable Condition of Soul, whil'ſt thou art on this ſide Heav'n? Didſt thou ever hear or read of any of *God*'s Saints upon Earth, that were unchangeable in their holy Diſpoſitions, whil'ſt they continued in this Region of Mutability? Behold the Man after *God*'s own heart, thou ſhalt find him ſometimes ſo couragious, as if the Spirits of all his Worthies were met in his own Boſom, how reſolutely doth he blow off all dangers, trample on his Enemies, and triumph over all croſs Events? Another while thou ſhalt find him ſo dejected, and transform'd from what he was: When chearful; *The Lord is my Shepherd, I ſhall lack nothing*, Pſal. 23. 1. In Affliction; *Why art thou ſo ſad, my Soul, and*

why art thou ſo diſquieted within me? Pſal. 42. 14. In Fortitude; *I will not be afraid of ten thouſands of people, that have ſet themſelves againſt me round about,* Pſal. 3. 6. In Trouble; *Hide me under the ſhadow of thy Wings, from the Wicked that oppreſs me; from my deadly Enemies, who compaſs me about,* Pſal. 17. 84. In his Integrity; *Thy Loving Kindneſs is before mine Eyes, and I have walked in thy Truth,* Pſal. 26. 3. In contrary Events; *Lord, where are thy loving Kindneſſes?* Pſal. 89. 49. And doſt thou not hear him in one Breath profeſſing his Confidence, and lamenting his Diſſertion; *Lord, by thy Favour thou haſt made my Mountain to ſtand ſtrong: Thou didſt hide thy Face and I was troubled,* Pſal. 30. 7. Look upon St. *Paul*; Sometimes thou ſhalt ſee him erecting Trophies of Victory to his *God*: *In all theſe things we are more than Conquerors, through him that loved us,* Rom. 8. 37. On the contrary, thou ſhalt find him lamenting his own ſinful Condition; *Oh, wretched Man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the Body of this Death!* Rom. 7. 24. In a holy Rapture, thou ſhalt find him caught up into the Third Heaven, and by Permiſſion of the *Almighty*, buffetted by the Meſſengers of Satan, and uttering Complaints to *God* of the Violence of that Aſſault. Here the Spouſe of *Chriſt* bemoaning her ſelf; *I opened to my Beloved, but my Beloved had withdrawn himſelf, and was gone: My Soul failed, when he ſpoke. I ſought him: but I could not find him; I called him but he made me no anſwer,* Cant. 5. 6. Thus is it with thee, whil'ſt thou art in this Carnality: The Temper of thy Soul will be, ſubject to Viciſſitudes. Should'ſt thou continue always in the ſame State, I ſhould ſuſpect thee. This difference betwixt Nature and Grace; the One is ſtill uniform; the Other varies according to the pleaſure of the Giver: *The Spirit bloweth where, and where it liſteth,* Joh. 3. 8 When therefore

therefore thou find'ſt the gracious Inſpirations of the Holy Ghoſt within thee, be thankful to the Infinite Munificence of that Bleſſed Spirit: And ſtill pray; *Ariſe, O North, and come thou South Wind, that the Spices thereof may flow out*, Cant. 4. 16. But when thou finds thy Soul becalm'd, and not a Leaf ſtirring in its Garden, be not too much dejected with an ungrounded Opinion of being deſtituted of thy *God*; neither repine at the Seaſons, or Meaſures of his Bounty: That moſt free and beneficent Agent, will not be tyed to our Terms; but will give us what he ſees neceſſary: Therefore humbly wait upon his Goodneſs: and *be confident, that he who hath begun his good Work in thee, will perform it until the Day of Jeſus Chriſt*, Phil. 1. 6.

14. IT is true, (thou ſay'ſt) if *God* had began the Operation, He would at laſt, for his own Glory finiſh it: But for me, I am a Man dead in Treſpaſſes and Sins; and never had any true Contrition in me: Some ſhew, indeed, I have made of a Chriſtian Profeſſion; but I have only deceived the World with a fallacious Pretence, and have not found in my ſelf the Verity, and Solidity of thoſe Heavenly Vertues, whereof I have made an Oſtentation. It were pity thou ſhouldſt be ſo bad as thou repreſenteſt thy ſelf: I have no tender Compaſſion in ſtore for Hypocriſie; nor no Diſpoſition is more odious to the *Almighty*; inſomuch, as when he expreſſes Vengeance againſt Sinners, he uſes thoſe terms of Terror, *I will appoint him his portion with the Hypocrites*, Mat. 24. 51. Were it thus with thee, it were high time to work thy Repentance in Duſt and Aſhes; and reſign thy ſelf into the hands of his Almighty Protection, to be created anew by his Powerful Spirit; and never to give thy ſelf Peace, till thou findeſt thy ſelf *Renewed in the Spirit of thy Mind*, Eph. 4. 23. But, in the mean

while, take heed of being guilty of miſ-judging thine own Soul; and miſpriſing the Operation of *God*'s Spirit: *God* hath been better to thee, than thou wilt acknowledge: Thou haſt a true Senſe of Grace, and perceiv'ſt it not. There is no Cogniſance to be taken of the Sentence thou paſſeſt upon thy ſelf, in the hour of Temptation: When thy heart was free, thou wert in another Mind; and ſhalt, upon better advice, reaſume thy former Thoughts.

15. IT is with thee, as with *Eutychus*, that fell down from the third Story, and was taken up for Dead, when his Life remained in him. We have known thoſe in Trances, without any perception of Life; yea, ſome (as that ſubtil *Johannes Duns Scotus*) laid in their Graves before their Souls had taken leave of their Bodies, though unable to exert thoſe Faculties, which might Evince her hidden Preſence. Such perhaps art thou at the worſt; and wert thou in Charity with thy ſelf, thou wouldeſt be found in a better Condition. There is the ſame reaſon of the Natural Life and the Spiritual: Where it is diſcern'd by Breathings, Senſe and Motions; where there is a breathing Motion, there muſt be a Life that ſends it forth: If then the Soul breaths Holy Deſires, doubtleſs there is a Life whence they proceed. Now deny, if thou can'ſt, that thou haſt not theſe Spiritual Breathings of Holy Deſires Internally? Doſt thou not many times ſigh for thine own Inſanity? Is not thine heart perplexed with the Thoughts of thy Spiritual wants? Doſt thou not truly deſire, that *God* would *Renew a right Spirit within thee*? Be cheerful: This is the Operation of *God*'s Spirit: As well may a Man breath without Life, as thou couldſt be thus affected without Repentance. Senſe is a quick Diſcrier of Life: Wound a dead Man, he is not ſenſible; but the Living perceiveth the eaſieſt Touch. When thou

haſt

haſt heard the Judgments of *God*, denounced againſt Sinners, and laid to thy Conſcience; has thy heart been pierced with them? Haſt thou not ſecretly thought, how ſhall I decline this dreadful Damnation? When thou haſt heard the Mercies of *God* to Penitent Sinners, hath not thy heart ſaid, Oh that I had my ſhare in'em! When thou haſt heard *God* blaſphem'd, haſt thou not felt a horror in thy Boſom? All theſe are Symptoms of a Spiritual Life.

16. MOTION is the perfecteſt Diſcoverer of Life: He that ſtirs his Limbs is not dead. The Feet of the Soul are the Affections: Haſt thou not found an hate and deteſtation of that Sin, wherein thou haſt been allured: And diſcover'd Grief of heart for thy Indiſpoſition to all good things? Haſt thou not found a Love to, and Complacency in thoſe who are truely Religious and Conſcionable? Without a Life of Repentance, Penitence had vaniſht. Are not thine Eyes and Hands often lift up to implore mercy? Canſt thou deny, thou haſt a real, though weak Appetite to the means, and degrees of it? This is that *Hunger and Thirſt after Righteouſneſs*, to which *Chriſt* hath pronounc'd Bleſſedneſs? *Matth.* 5. 6. Diſcomfort not thy ſelf with the diſappearance of *God*'s Spirit: In the hour of Temptation, it is with thee, as with a Tree in Winter, whoſe Sap is run to the Root; where there is no Appearance of Vegetation, by any Buds or Bloſſoms, but appears, motionleſs: Yet when the Sun returns his comfortable Beams, it ſprouts forth afreſh, and bewrays that Vital Juice, which lay in the Earth: So thou muſt with *Patience* wait, till the Sun of Righteouſneſs ſhall ariſe with Healing in his Wings, and Summon thy Humidity into thy Branches; that that Grace may ſpring in thee, which is able to ſave thy Soul: Then thou wilt ſay

of

of thine heart, as *Jacob* of his hard Lodging; *Surely, the* Lord *is in this place, and I knew it not*, Gen. 28. 16. Only uſe the means, and wait patiently *God*'s Leiſure; ſtay upon the Bank of this *Bethesda*, till the *Angel* deſcend and move the Water.

16. I could gladly, thou replieſt, attend with *Patience* upon *God*, in this happy Work of the Excitation of Grace, were I but ſure I had it; or could be perſwaded of the Verity of my Converſion: But it is my unhappineſs, that here I am at an uncomfortable loſs; for I am inform'd, that every Convert can deſign the Time, Place, means and manner of his Converſion; and demonſtrate how near he was to the Gates of Death, nay, to the Verge of Hell; when *God*, by a mighty Arm, has ſnatcht him away, from the Pit of *Perdition*, and reſcu'd him from everlaſting Damnation; placing him in a State of Eternal Salvation; Which I cannot attain to; not finding any ſuch vehement Concuſſion, hearty Contrition, or ſuch forcible and irreſiſtable Operation of *God*'s Spirit in me, nor can I practice the Sermon deſign'd for my Converſion, or thoſe Approaches my Soul made towards an hardly-recovered Deſperation.

To which I anſwer: It is not ſafe for any Man to ſet Limits to the Almighty; or to preſcribe Rules to that Infinite Wiſdom: That moſt free, and All-wiſe Agent, will not be tyed to walk always in one Path; but varies his Courſes according to his Divine Will. One he calls ſuddenly, as St. *Paul*; another by ſweet Solicitations, as *Philip*, *Nathanael*, *Andrew*, *Peter*, *Matthew*, and other Apoſtles. One he draws to Heaven with gracious Invitations; another with a ſtrong hand. We have known thoſe, who having miſpent their Juvenile Years, in notorious debauch'd Courſes, living as without *God*, and have been heart-ſtricken with ſome

ſome Denunciation of Judgment; which hath ſo wrought upon 'em, that it hath brought them within ſight of Hell: But after deep Humiliation, have been raiſed through *God*'s mercy, to a Comfortable Senſe of the Divine Favour, and have proceeded to a high degree of Regeneration, and liv'd and dy'd good Chriſtians.

18. BUT this is not every ones Caſe; thoſe who have from their Infancy been brought up in *The Nurture and Fear of the Lord*, Eph. 6. 4. and from their Youth been Train'd up under a Godly and Conſcionable Miniſtry; where they have been plyed with the effectual means of Grace: *Precept upon Precept, Line upon Line; here a little, and there a little*, Iſa. 28. 10. and by an inſenſible Conveyance, received the Gracious Inoperations of the Spirit of *God*, though not without many inward Debates, Temptations, and deep Humiliation, for their particular Failings; theſe cannot expect to find ſo ſenſible Alterations in themſelves: As well a Child knows when he was born, as theſe know the inſtant of their Spiritual Regeneration; and as well may they ſee the Graſs grow, as perceive their inſenſible Increaſe of Grace: It is ſufficient that a Child, attaining to Reaſon, knows he was born; as when we ſee the Graſs higher than we left it, know that it is grown. Let it then ſuffice thee, that the thing is finiſh't, though thou canſt not define the time, and manner of doing it: Be not over curious in matters of particular Preceptions, whil'ſt thou art aſſured of what is wrought in thee. The skilful Chyrurgion, makes a Fontinel in the Body of his Patient, either by a ſudden Inciſion, or by a leiſurely Corroſive; both equally tend towards Health. Truſt *God* with thy ſelf, and with his own Work; without making inquiry, which way he deſigns thy Salvation?

19. ALL

19. ALL were ſafe, thou ſay'ſt, if I could be aſcertain'd of my Election to Life Eternal: I could be *Patient*, ſo I might be ſure: But, wretched that I am, here I am plung'd: I ſee others walk comfortably, as if in Heav'n; whereas I droop under a continual Diffidence; raiſing my ſelf new Arguments of Diſtruſt. Could my heart be ſettled in this Aſſurance, nothing could make me unhappy.

It is true, as all other mercies flow from our Election; ſo the ſecuring of this one, involves all other Favours that concern the welfare of our Souls. It is no leſs true, our Election may be aſſured; elſe the Holy Ghoſt had not laid ſo deep a Charge upon us, to uſe our utmoſt Endeavour to aſcertain it: And we are much wanting to our ſelves, if hearing ſo excellent a Bleſſing may be attained by diligence, if we pull not our hand out of our Boſom, to reach that Crown ſo offer'd to us: But withal, 'tis true, if there were not a difficulty in this work, the Apoſtle had not ſo earneſtly call'd for the utmoſt of our Endeavour to effect it; 2 *Pet.* 1. 10.

20. THE Truth is, in Chriſtianity there is no Path, wherein there is more need of treading warily, than in this: On each ſide is Danger and Death; Security on one hand, and Preſumption on the other: And the Miſcarriage either way, is deadly. Behold the miſerable Examples on both kinds: Some walk careleſly, as if there were no Heav'n; or if ſuch a Place, yet of no Concernment: Their hearts are fond of the Pleaſure of this Life; and they neither care, nor wiſh to be happier, than this World can make 'em: *The God of this World hath blinded their Eyes, that they believe not*, 2 Cor. 4. 4. Others walk proudly, being vainly puff't up with their own ungrounded Imaginations, as if they were inveſted with Immortal Glory; fancying

cying themſelves rapt up with St. *Paul* into the Third Heav'n, and have ſeen their Names recorded in the Book of Life: Whereas this is nothing but an Illuſion of that Lying Spirit; who knows the the way to keep 'em out of Heaven, is to make 'em believe they are in a State of happineſs.

21. IT muſt be thy main Care to walk, in a juſt Equidiſtance from both theſe Extreams; that thou may'ſt be reſolute without Preſumption, and careful without Diffidence. And, *Firſt*, I adviſe thee to abandon thoſe falſe Teachers, who improve their Wits for the Ruine of Souls, in broacſing the ſad Doctrines of Uncertainty and Diſtruſt. Be ſure our *Saviour* had not bid his Diſciples rejoyce, that their *Names are written in Heaven*, Luke 10. 20. Had there not been a particular Enrollment; nor the Diſciples could never have attained to the notice of ſuch Inſcription. Neither is this a Mercy peculiar to his Domeſtick Followers; but univerſal to all that believe what they teſtifie; and by believing we may be aſſur'd our Names are Regiſtred in thoſe Eternal Records.

22. NOT that we ſhould take an *Aceſius* his Ladder, and climb up to Heaven, and turn over the Book of *God*'s Councils, and read our ſelves deſign'd to Glory. But as we by Experience imagine we can by Reflections read thoſe Letters, which directly we cannot: So we may do here in ſpiritual Objects. The ſame Apoſtle that gives us our Charge, gives us withal our Directions, *Wherefore the rather, Brethren, give all diligence to make your Callings and Election ſure; for if ye do thoſe things, ye ſhall never fall; for ſo an Entrance ſhall be miniſtred unto you abundantly, into the Everlaſting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour* Jeſus Chriſt, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10, 11. Here is firſt our Calling, then our Election: Not that we ſhould begin with Heaven, and thence

thence deſcend to Earth; but that we ſhould from Earth aſcend to Heaven, from our Calling, to our Election: As knowing, that God ſhews what he hath done for us above, by that which he hath wrought in us here below.

23. OUR Calling not outward and formal, but inward and effectual. The Spirit of *God* hath a Voice, and our Soul an Ear; that Voice of the Spirit ſpeaks inwardly and effectually to the Ear of the Soul, calling us out of the State of Corrupt Nature, into the State of Grace; out of Darkneſs, into his marvellous Light. By thy Calling, thou mayſt judge of thine Election: *God* never works in vain, neither doth he caſt away his ſaving Graces: But *whom he did Predeſtinate, them alſo he Called; and whom he Called, them he Juſtified; and whom he Juſtified, them alſo he Glorified*, Rom. 8. 30. This doubtleſs, thou ſayſt, is ſure in it ſelf, but how aſſured to me? I anſwer: That which the Apoſtle adds, *By good Works*, if we comprehend the Acts of Believing and Repenting, is a ſpecial Evidence of our Election. But not to urge that Clauſe of *Good Works*, which (tho read in the Vulgar) is found wanting in our Editions; The clear words of the Text evince no leſs: *For if ye do theſe things, ye ſhall never fall*: Here is our Negative Certainty: And for our Poſitive; *So an Entrance ſhall be Miniſtred unto you abundantly, into the Everlaſting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour* Jeſus Chriſt. If we ſhall never fall, but ſhall undoubtedly enter the Kingdom of *Chriſt*; what poſſible ſcruple can be of the accompliſhment of our Election? What then are theſe things that muſt be perform'd by us? Fix your Eyes upon that Collection of Graces, following: *If you add to your Faith, Vertue, and to Vertue, Knowledge; and to Knowledge, Temperance; and to Temperance, Patience; and to Patience, Godlineſs; and*

to

to Godlineſs, Brotherly Kindneſs, Charity, 2 Pet. 1. 5, 6.

23. IF Thou wouldſt be inform'd what God hath written concerning thee in Heaven, look into thy own Boſom, and ſee what Graces he hath wrought in thee. *Truth of Grace,* ſaith the Divine Apoſtle, *will make good the certainty of your Election.* Not to inſtance the reſt of that Heavenly Combination; do but ſingle the firſt and the laſt, Faith and Charity: For Faith, how clear is that of our Saviour; *He that believeth in him that ſent me, hath Everlaſting Life, and ſhall not come into Condemnation; but hath paſſed from Death to Life,* Joh. 5. 24. What danger can befall us in our acquiring Heaven? All the Peril is in the way. Now the Believer is already paſſed into Life: This is the Grace, by which *Chriſt dwells in our Hearts,* Epheſ. 3. 17. and whereby we have Communion with him, and an aſſured Teſtimony of and from him: *For he that believeth in the Son of God, hath the Witneſs in himſelf:* And what Witneſs is that? *This is the Record, that God hath given us Eternal Life: And this Life is in his Son; he that hath the Son, hath Life,* 1 Joh. 5. 10, 11, 12. Oh happy Connexion! Eternal Life firſt: This Life Eternal, is in and by *Chriſt Jeſus*; he is ours by Faith, and this Faith teſtifieth to our Souls aſſurance of Life Eternal: Charity is the laſt, which comprehends our love to God and Man: For, from the reflection of *God's* Love to us, ariſeth a Love from us to him again. The beloved Diſciple can ſay, *We love him, becauſe he loved us firſt,* 1 Joh. 4. 19. And from theſe reſulteth our Love to our Brethren: And ſuch an Evidence we have, that the Apoſtle tells us expreſly, *That we know we are paſſed from Death to Life, becauſe we love the Brethren,* 1 Joh. 3. 14.: For the love of the Father is inſeperable from the love of the Son: *He that loveth*

him

him that Begets, loves him that is Begotten of him, 1 Joh. 5. 1.

25. NOW deal impartially with thine own Heart, and enquire ſeriouſly, as in the Preſence of the Searcher of all Hearts, Whether thou doſt not find in thy ſelf theſe Evidences of thine Election? Art thou not effectually, tho not perfectly called out of the World, and corrupt Nature? Doſt thou not inwardly abhor ſinful ways, and think of what thou wert with Deteſtation? Doſt thou not endeavour to be in all things approved to God, and confirmed to thy Saviour? Doſt thou not caſt thy ſelf upon the Lord *Jeſus*, and depend upon his free All-ſufficiency for Pardon and Salvation? Doſt thou not love that infinite Goodneſs, who hath been ſo rich in Mercies to thee; and bleſs thoſe Beams of Goodneſs which he hath caſt upon his Saints on Earth? Laſtly, Doſt thou not love a good Man, becauſe he is ſo? Comfort thy ſelf in the Lord, and let no Fear and Diſtruſt poſſeſs thy Soul: *Faithful is he that hath Called thee,* 1 Theſ. 5. 24. who will alſo *Preſerve thy whole Spirit, and Soul, and Body blameleſs, unto the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt,* 1 Theſ. 5. 23.

A Prayer for an Afflicted Conſcience.

O GOD, the Father of all Mercies and Heavenly Conſolation, ſuffer me not at any time to fall from thee, or to be ſwallowed up in the depth of Affliction; but when ever it ſhall pleaſe thee to try me in that Furnace, let my ſure Hope and Confidence be fixed on thee; that when multitude of Sorrows ſhall encompaſs my Soul, my only truſt may be in thy Mercies. Give me the Oil of Joy for Mourning, and the Garment of Gladneſs for the Spirit of Heavineſs, that thy great

Name

Name may be Glorified by me, in a thankful acknowledgement of thy Goodneſs towards me.

2. *LORD, thou beholdeſt afar off; the manifold Perils and Dangers I am expoſed to in this World, which is a ſea of Miſeries and numerous Calamities; The Winds blow, the deep Waters lift up their proud ſwelling Waves, and the ſtormy Tempeſts threaten me with Ship-wrack, to the Ruine and Deſtruction both of Soul and Body. But O thou, who art the God of Unity, ſpeak Peace unto this inward Voice, and ſay unto it, I am thy Salvation, ſo ſhall I be refreſhed with thy loving Kindneſs, and Praiſe thee ever more.* Amen.

SECT. IV.

Remedies againſt Temptations.

1. THOU art aſſaulted with Temptations: And what the Enemy cannot do by Force or Fraud, he ſeeks by Importunity. Can this ſeem averſe to thee, when the Son of *God* was in the Wilderneſs forty Days, and forty Nights, under the Tempter? He that durſt ſet upon the *Captain of our Salvation*, Heb. 2. 10. How ſhall he ſpare frail Fleſh and Blood? Why ſhould Chriſt ſuffer himſelf to be Tempted, but to ſupport thee in all thy Temptations? The Keys of the Bottomleſs Pit are at his diſpoſal: He could have confin'd that Preſumptuous Spirit to Chains of Darkneſs, and admitted him no nearer to him than Hell; but he would let him looſe, and permit him to act his worſt, purpoſely that we might not diſlike to be Tempted, and that he might foyl our greateſt Enemy.

2. CANST

2. CANST thou think that he, who ſits at the right Hand of Majeſty, commanding the Powers of Heaven, Earth and Hell, could not keep off that malignant Spirit from aſſailing thee? Canſt thou think him leſs Merciful, than mighty? Would he die to ſave thee? And will he turn that Miſcreant of Hell looſe to worry thee? Doſt thou not Pray daily to thy Father in Heaven, to *Lead thee not into Temptation*? Thou haſt to do with a *God* that heareth Prayers; Oh thou of little Faith, why feareſt thou? He that was led by his Divine Spirit into the Wilderneſs, to be Tempted of that Evil Spirit, bids thee pray to the Father that he would not *Lead thee into Temptation*; implying, that thou couldſt not go into Temptation, unleſs he lead thee; and whilſt he that is thy Father, leads thee, how canſt thou miſcarry? *Let no Man when he is Tempted, ſay, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with Evil, neither tempteth he any Man*, Jam. 1. 13. *God* Tempteth thee not; yet being his, thou couldſt not be Tempted without him, both permitting and ordering that Temptation to his own Glory, and thy eternal Welfare.

3. THAT Grace which God hath given thee, he will have thus manifeſted. How had we known the admirable Continency of *Joſeph*, if he had not been ſtrongly ſollicited by a Wanton Miſtreſs? Or *David*'s Valour, if the *Philiſtines* had not had a Giantly Challenger to encounter him? How had we known the invincible Piety of the *Three Children*, had there been no *Furnace* to try 'em? Or of *Daniel*, if no Lyons to accompany him? Be aſſured, thy Glory ſhall be Proportionable to thy Tryal: Neither couldſt thou ever be ſo happy, hadſt thou not been beholding to Temptations. How often ſayſt thou, have I beaten off theſe baſe Suggeſtions; yet ſtill they retort upon me, as if Denials invited

invited 'em; as tho' they meant to tire me with their Solicitations; as if I muſt yield, and be over-pow'rd, though not with their Force, yet with their Frequence?

4. KNOW. thou haſt to do with *Spiritual Wickedneſs*, Epheſ. 6. 12. whoſe Nature is as unweariable, as their Malice unſatisfiable: Thou haſt a Spirit of thine own; and *God* hath inſpir'd thee with his: So as he expects thou ſhould'ſt, through the Pow'r of his Gracious Aſſiſtance, match the Importunity of that Evil Spirit, with an indefatigable Reſiſtance. *Be ſtrong therefore in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might; and put on the whole Armour of God, that thou may'ſt be able to ſtand in the Evil Day; and having done all, to ſtand*, Epheſ 6. 10, 11, 13. Look upon a ſtronger Champion than thy ſelf, the bleſſed *Apoſtle*; thou ſhalt find him in thy own Condition; See *the Meſſenger of Satan ſent to buffet him*, 2 Cor. 12. 7. and he did it to purpoſe: With what extream Rigour was he buffeted on both ſides, and how often? *Thrice he beſought the Lord, that it might depart from him*, Verſe 8. but the Temptation holds; only a Comfort countervails it: *My Grace is ſufficient for thee, for my Grace is made perfect in Weakneſs*, Verſe 9.

5. IT is not to be conſider'd, how hard thou art aim'd at, as how ſtrongly thou art upheld: How many with the Bleſſed Martyr *Theodorus*, have upon *Racks* and *Gibbets* found their Courage ſtronger than their Pains? Whil'ſt therefore the Goodneſs of *God* ſupplies thee with abundance of Spiritual Vigour, and Refreſhment anſwerable to the worſt of Aſſaults, what doſt thou complain of ſuffering? The Advice is Sublime, which St. *James* gives his Compatiots; *My Brethren, count it all Joy, when ye fall into divers Temptations.* Let Temptations be rather Trials by Afflictions, than Suggeſtions

of Sin; yet even those overcome, yield no small cause of Triumph: For by them is our Faith tried; and the trying of our Faith worketh *Patience*; and the perfect work of *Patience*, is a blessed Entireness. The number of Enemies adds to the Praise of Victory: To overcome a single Temptation, is commendable; but to subdue Multitudes is glorious.

6. ALAS, thou replieſt, I am oppreſt, not with Multiplicity, but with Pow'r: In *Duelling* reſpect is had to the Equality both of the Combatants and Weapons: But alas, howam I overmatch'd! I am a weak Wretch; and *We wreſtle not againſt Fleſh and Blood; but againſt Principalities and Powers: againſt the Rulers of the Darkneſs of this World, againſt Spiritual Wickedneſs in Heavenly Places*, Ephes. 6. 12. *Behold the* Amorite, *whoſe height is like the height of Cedars, and their Strength as the Strength of Oaks*, Amos 2. 9. We are but poor Piſmirs in the Valley, to theſe Men of Meaſures? Who can ſtand before theſe Sons of *Anak*? I did not adviſe thee to be ſtrong in thy ſelf; we are all Compounds of weakneſs: One of thoſe Pow'rs of Darkneſs were able to ſubdue all Mortality: But to be *Strong in the Lord*; whoſe inferiour Angel is able to vanquiſh a Hell of Devils: And in the Pow'r of his Might, commandeth the moſt furious of thoſe Infernal Spirits to their Chains. What a Condition ſhould we be in, if left to our ſelves; there were no way for us, but Circumvention and Death: But, *Our Help is in the Name of the Lord, who hath made Heaven and Earth*, Pſal. 124. 8. *The Lord is our Strength, and our Shield*, Pſal. 28. 7. *He is our Rock and our Salvation; He is our Defence, ſo as we ſhall not be moved*, Pſal. 62. 2, 6. *It is he that hath girded us with Strength unto* Battle, *and that ſubdueth thoſe that riſe up againſt us*, Pſal. 18. 39.

7. ASSUME

7. ASSUME Courage therefore to thy ſelf; there can't be ſo much difference betwixt thee, and thoſe Helliſh Pow'rs, as there is betwixt them, and the Almighty: There Force is finite, and limited by Omnipotence. How glad do'ſt thou think, *Jannes* and *Jambres*, the great Magicians of *Egypt*, would have made but an Inſect in affront to *Moſes*? but could not. How earneſt was that Legion of Devils fain to beg leave to prevail over a few *Gaderene*-Swine? How ſtrong ſoever they ſeem to thee, yet to him they are ſo weak, that they cannot move without him. Who fears a *Bear*, or a *Lion*, when chain'd to a Stake? Children then can be Spectators, when they are ſo Reſtrained. Look not on thy ſelf therefore, nor them; but look up to the Almighty, who ordinates all Motions to his own holy Purpoſes; and even out of their Malice, raiſes Glory to himſelf, and Advantage to his Servants.

8. IT is a ſad Advantage, (thou ſay'ſt) I have made of Temptations: For, Alas! I have been foil'd by 'em, what by their Subtilty and Violence, have been ſeduced into a grievous Sin againſt *God*, and lie down in a juſt Confuſion of Face, to have been ſo miſerably vanquiſhed. Had'ſt thou wanted Tears for thine Offences, I ſhould willingly have lent thee ſome. But it is indeed a deplorable Caſe, that thou haſt given thy deadly Enemy this occaſion to Triumph over thee; and haſt thus provoked *God*: Nevertheleſs be thou throughly humbled under the Guilt of thy Sin, and be not too haſty in ſnatching a Pardon out of the hand thou haſt offended: Be humbled, and after a ſerious Repentance, be not diſ-heartned with thy Failings: Neither do I dread to tell thee of an Advantage to be made, not of thy Temptations only, but of thy Sin.

9. ART not thou a Gainer, if after this thy Af-

ſault, thou doſt in a Holy Indignation, riſe up, and fight the more valiantly? A Wound received, whets the Edge of Fortitude: Many a one had not been Victorious, if he had not bled firſt. Look where thou wilt, upon all the Saints of *God*; obſerve if thou canſt ſee any of them without his Scars: Many fearful Gaſhes we have beheld of the Nobleſt of *God*'s Champions whoſe Courage had not been raiſed to ſo high a Pitch, had it not been out of the ſenſe of ſome former Diſcomfortures! As ſome well-ſpirited Wreſtler, be not troubled with thy Fall, as zealous to repay it with a ſucceſsful Encounter. *We know*, ſaith the bleſſed Apoſtle, *that all things worketh together for good to them that love God*, Rom. 8. 28. Yea, even their very Sins. The *Corinthians* offended in their ſilent Connivance at the Inceſtuous Perſon: The Apoſtles Reproof produced their Sorrow: What was the Iſſue? *For behold, this ſelf-ſame thing that ye ſorrowed after a Godly ſort, what Carefulneſs is wrought in you? Yea, what clearing of your ſelves; yea, what Indignation; yea, what Fear; yea, what vehement Deſire; yea, what Zeal; yea, what Revenge?* 2 Cor. 7. 11. What a marvellous Advantage is here made of one Offence? And what hath *Satan* gain'd by this Encounter? One poor *Corinthian* is miſled to an inceſtuous Copulation: The Evil Spirit rejoiceth at ſuch a Prey; but how long ſhall he enjoy it? Soon after the offending Soul, upon the *Apoſtles* Cenſure, is reclaim'd; he is deliver'd to Satan, that he ſhould never poſſeſs him.

10. THE *Corinthians* are raiſed to a greater height of Godly Zeal, than ever. *Corinth* had never been ſo rich in Grace, if not defiled with ſo foul a Crime. Confeſs now, if this be not in effect thy Caſe? Shouldeſt thou ever have deteſted thy Sin, if thou had'ſt not been drawn in, to commit it?

Should'ſt

Shouldſt thou have had ſo fervent a Love to *God*, had it not been out of a ſenſe of his great Mercy, in remitting it? Wouldſt thou have been ſo weary in thy Stops, as thou art, if thou hadſt not ſlip'd? Give Glory to God, but ſhame to thy ſelf, and Bleſs him for the benefit that he hath been pleaſed to make of thine Offending him.

11. BUT Alas! thou ſayſt my Caſe is far worſe than it is conceiv'd; I have been more than once miſcarried into the ſame Sin: For after I have made profeſſion of my Repentance, I have been tranſported into my former Wickedneſs: Having waſht off my Sin, (as I thought) with many Tears, yet I have ſuffer'd my Soul to be defiled again. I muſt not flatter thee, this Condition is Dangerous: Thoſe Diſeaſes, which upon their firſt Seiſure have receiv'd Cure, after a Relapſe, have threatned Death. Look upon the Saints of *God*, thou ſhalt find they have kept a diſtance from that Fire wherewith they have been formerly Burn'd: Thou ſhalt not find *Noah* again Uncovered through Drunkenneſs, Nor *Judah* climbing to *Tamer*'s Bed: Thou ſhalt not take *Peter* again in the High-Prieſt's Hall, denying his Maſter; or after St. *Paul*'s Reproof, *Halting in his Diſſimulation*, Gall. 2. 11, 12, 13.

12. BUT tell me, notwithſtanding, Art thou truly ſerious with thy *God*? Haſt thou doubled thy Humiliation, for the Reduplication of thine Offence, and ſought God more inſtantly with an unfeigned Contrition? Haſt thou found thy Soul hath a greater deteſtation of Sin, than thine acquaintance with it hath indulg'd thee? Haſt thou taken this occaſion to lay hold on thy *Saviour*, and to reinforce the Vows of ſtrict Obedience? If ſo, this unpurpos'd Reiteration of thy Sin, ſhall be no Prejudice to thy Salvation. It is one thing for a Man

to walk on willingly in a beaten Path of Sin, another thing for him to be led out of the way of Righteouſneſs, by the violence of a Temptation, which he ſoon recovers by a ſincere Repentance.

13. THE Beſt cannot but be overtaken with Sin: But, *He that is Born of God, doth not commit Sin,* 1 Joh. 3. 9. He may be tranſported, but makes not a Cuſtom of doing ill: His Heart is againſt that, his Hand is drawn to: And if in this inward Strife he is over-power'd, he lyes not down with a willing Mind, but ſtruggles, and with a reaſſumed Courage, tramples on that which formerly ſupplanted him. Didſt thou give thy ſelf to a reſolved courſe of Sinning, and betwixt whiles ſmite thy Breaſt with a formal *God forgive me*, I ſhould have no Comfort for thee, but rather ſend thee to an afflictious Remedy of the *Almighty*, for Correction, if poſſibly thoſe Stripes may prevent thine Everlaſting Torments.

14. BUT now, ſince *What thou hateſt, that thou doſt; and thou doſt that which thou wouldſt not; and it is no more thou that doſt it, but Sin that dwels in thee,* Rom. 7. 19, 20. Exclaim as much as thou wilt on the ſinfulneſs of thy Sin, bewail thy Weakneſs with a better Man than thy ſelf: *O wretched Man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the Body of this Death,* Rom. 7. 24. But know, that thou haſt found Mercy with *God:* Thy repeated Sin may grieve, but cannot prejudice thy Soul. Had we to do with a Finite Compaſſion, it might be abated, by waſting it ſelf on a frequent Remiſſion, as a great River may be drawn dry by many ſmall Out-lets: But now that we deal with a God, whoſe Mercy is Infinite; it is not the greatneſs, or number of our Offences, that makes a difference in his free Remiſſion: That *God*, who hath charged our weak Charity, *Not to be overcome of Evil, but to overcome Evil with Good,* Rom.

Rom. 12. 21. juſtly ſcorneth that we ſhould imagine his Infinite and Incomprehenſible Goodneſs, can be check't with our Evil.

15. IT was not without a ſingular Providence, that St. *Peter* came to our *Saviour* with that Queſtion in his Mouth; *Lord, How often ſhall my Brother ſin againſt me, and I forgive him, till ſeven times?* That it might produce this Gracious Anſwer, for our perpetual Comfort: *I ſay not unto thee, until ſeven times, but until ſeventy times ſeven,* Matth. 18. 21, 22. Lord, if thou wilt have us ſinful Creatures, indulgent to one another, in our Mutual Offences; what Limits can be ſet to thy Mercies in our Sins againſt Thee? Be we Penitent, for thou art Gracious.

A Prayer againſt Temptations.

O Lord, thou art the God of my Strength, and to thee alone, I fly for refuge; the Tempter is now buſie, and labours to undermine me, and more eſpecially when I leaſt ſuſpect him: But, O let me be always ready to meet him in the Gate, before he advances too far upon me: Let not a Supine careleſſneſs ſeize upon my Spirits, but excite me to Vigilancy, that I may ſtand upon my Guard ever prepared to reſiſt him, even in the beginning of his firſt Aſſaults; Lord, grant I may be fortified with Faith, Courage and Reſolution, ſo that with the Aſſiſtance of thy Grace, I may gain the Conqueſt.

2. *FURNISH me with thy compleat Armour, the Helmet of Salvation, the Sword of the Spirit, and the Shield of Faith whereby Satan may be vanquiſhed; do thou Arm and ſo Strengthen me with thy Grace, that through the Power of thy Might, I may prevail againſt him, and put him to flight, when he is intending the greateſt miſchief, and moſt advantage againſt me; ſo*

ſhall I ſing Praiſes unto thy Name, both now and ever; and teach others to reſort unto thee in their greateſt dangers, and hardſt Conflicts, even then when the powers of darkneſs ſhall moſt obſtruct them. Amen.

SECT. V.

Imbecillity of Grace.

1. THOU complaineſt of the *Imbecillity of Grace:* Some little motions thou art ſenſible of *God*'s Spirit; but ſo inſignificant, that thou canſt not find any ſolid Comfort. Thou ſeeſt others (thou ſay'ſt) whoſe *Breaſts are full of Milk, and their Bones moiſtned with Marrow*, Job 21. 24. whil'ſt thou languiſheſt under a Spiritual Leanneſs and Imbecillity. Thou wanteſt that vigorous Heat of holy Affections, and that Alacrity in the Performance of Holy Duties, which thou obſerveſt in other Chriſtians. I like this Complaint, and tell thee, That without this, thou could'ſt not be in the way to happineſs.

2. THINK'ST thou, that thoſe whom thou eſteem'ſt eminent in Grace, make not the ſame moan that thou do'ſt? Certainly, they never had any, if they did not complain of too little. Every Man is ſenſible of his own wants, and ready to paſs ſecret Cenſures upon himſelf for being applauded by others. Even the Man after *God*'s own heart, can ſay, *But I am Poor and Sorrowful*, Pſal. 69. 29. He was a great King when he ſaid ſo; it was not Meaneſs in Eſtate, that troubled him; but a Spiritual Neceſſity: For he had before, in the ſame Heavenly Anthem profeſſed; O *God, thou knoweſt my Fooliſhneſs, and my Guiltineſs is not hid from thee,*

thee, Pſal. 69. 5. It was an old Obſervation of Wiſe *Solomon*; *There is that maketh himſelf Rich, and hath nothing*; *there is that maketh himſelf Poor, yet hath great Riches*, Prov. 13. 7. In this latter Rank are many Pious Souls, and thine (I hope) for one; who certainly had never been ſo Rich in Grace, if they had been conceited of greater Store: Even in this Senſe many a Saint may ſay with St. *Paul*, *When I am weak, then I am ſtrong*; ſince the Complaint of Weakneſs, argues Strength: And, on the contrary, an Opinion of ſufficient Grace, is an Evident Conviction of meer Emptineſs.

3. BUT ſuppoſe thy ſelf ſo poor as thou pretendeſt; it is not ſo much what we have, as how we improve it. How many have we known, that have grown Rich out of a little; and others, out of a great Stock, have run to Beggary? Had that *Servant* in the *Goſpel*, with *One Talent*, imploy'd it to the Gain of a *Second*, he had been proportionably as well rewarded, as he that with *Five* gain'd *Ten*. In our Temporal Eſtate, we are warned by the Wiſeſt Man, to *Take heed of making haſte to be Rich*, Prov. 28. 20. And the Apoſtle tells us, *That he that would be Rich, falls into many Temptations*, 1 Tim. 6. 9. Surely, there is no ſmall danger alſo, in affecting to be too ſuddenly Rich in the Endowments of the Soul: This cannot but be accompanied with the Temptation of an unthankful diſtruſt: For he that believes makes not haſte; and we cannot be ſufficiently thankful for what we have, whil'ſt we do over eagerly reach after what we have not.

4. TELL me, thou Querulous Soul, doſt thou not acknowledge what thou receiveſt to be *God*'s Gift? And wilt thou not allow the Benefactor of Heav'n, to Diſpenſe his Favours as he pleaſeth? If he think fit to fill thy Veſſel with drops of Grace, art thou diſcontented, becauſe he pours not out his Spirit

Spirit in full Vials? If thou enjoys any, it is his bounty, and more than thou canſt repay him: Take what thou haſt, as an Earneſt of more; and wait thankfully upon his Bounty for the reſt: Is it not convenient in a free Gift, to attend the leiſure of the Donor? What ſturdy Beggars are we, not to ſtay at the Door till we be ſerved; and grudge at our Alms, when it comes? Look upon *Abraham*, thou ſhalt find him fourſcore and ſix Years Childleſs; and after he had got *Iſhmael*, he waited fourteen Years for the Promiſed Seed; and when he had enjoy'd him not longer than he expected him, he muſt Sacrifice him to the Giver. Thus muſt our Faith be exerciſed for Time and Meaſure of Mercy.

5. THY Graces are weak; yet diſcomfort not thy ſelf: How many frail Bodies have we known, which with careful Tendance, have been Healthier than thoſe of groſſer Conſtitutions. Neither is it otherwiſe in the Soul: Soundneſs of heart, is Health; Increas'd Degrees of Grace, make up the Strength of that Spiritual Part: If thou have this Health tenderly obſerved, thou may'ſt be happy in thy Maker, although more happy in a Comfortable Senſe of a ſtronger Fruition. We have to do with a *God* that minds not Quantity, as Truth of Repentance. He knows we have nothing, but what he gives us, and enables us to improve: And where he ſees our Wills and Endeavours not wanting, he is ready to accept and crown his own Gifts in us. *He will not break the Bruiſed Reed, nor quench the Smoaking Flax*, Matth. 12. 20.

6. THOU art weak in Grace: Be not diſmay'd; there are all Ages, all Statures in *Chriſt*. Shall the Child repine, that he is not grown a Man? Shall the Dwarf quarrel that he is not a Giant? Were there a Standard of Graces, leſs than is required

quired and would not be accepted, thou hadſt reaſon to be troubled: But it is ſo far from that, as that our *Saviour* hath encharged; *Suffer little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of ſuch is the Kingdom of Heaven*, Mat. 19.14. In ſome Legal Oblations, it pleaſed *God* to regard Time and Age: *The Lamb for the Paſſover, and for the Peace-Offering*, Lev. 3.7. *The Bullock for the Sin-Offering of* Iſrael, Lev. 4.14. have their Date aſſign'd: And in diverſe Caſes, he hath called for *Two Turtle Doves, or two Young Pigeons*, Lev.1.14. Lev.5.7,11. Lev.12.8. Lev.15.14. Young *Turtles*, and Old *Doves*, (according to our *Jewiſh* Doctors) were unlawful to be offered: But in Spiritual Sacrifices; he that is Eternal regards not Time, nor Statures: For the Eleventh Hour, carried the Peny as well as the Firſt: *And let the weak ſay, I am ſtrong*, Joel 3.10.

7. IT perplexes thee, thou haſt made ſo ſlow a Progreſs in Graces: Thy deſire is Heav'n-ward, and thou checkeſt thy ſelf for want of Celerity: It is an happy Ambition, that wings thee to Bleſſedneſs. Quicken thy ſelf, with Gracious Incitations; but obſerve, we muſt not go a full Career: For that Paſſage admits not of haſte: How many have we known, by much forwardneſs, have been rejected in their Journey, whether by miſtaking their Way, or miſplacing their Steps? But I am glad it is the deſire of thy Soul, to *Run the way of* God's *Commandments*, Pſal 119.32. and do encourage thy Zeal, in purſuing that Holy Race; ever praying thou may'ſt *ſo run, as that thou may'ſt obtain*, 1 Cor. 9.24. But withal, I tell thee, that, *Bleſſed is the Man, that doth but walk in the Law of the Lord*, Pſal. 119.1. Whilſt thou paſſeſt on, though but a Foot-pace, thou art every ſtep nearer to Glory: And if thou gain'ſt ground, thou art ſecure. *Bleſſed is the Man, whoſe Strength is in Thee*, O God; *in whoſe heart are*

thy

thy Ways; who passing through the Vale of Misery, goes on from Strength to Strength, till he appear before Thee his God *in* Zion, Psal. 84. 5, 6, 7.

8. THY Grace is diminutive; but thou laboureſt for more: This is a good Beginning of Heavenly Treaſure: For he is in a way to Riches, that deſires to thrive; and never any Holy Soul loſt her Longing. If thy Wiſhes be hearty, thou haſt thy deſire, or ſhalt be aſſur'd of it. *If any Man lack Wiſdom, let him ask it of* God; *who giveth to all Men liberally, and upbraideth no Man; and it ſhall be given him*, Jam. 1. 5. Were this Condition offer'd for Temporal Riches, who would be Poor? And if we embrace it not in Spirituals, we diſtruſt the Promiſes, or neglect Mercies. In Temporal things, how many have ſo eagerly Chaſed the World, that they have over-run it; and whil'ſt they greedily ſwallowed Gain, have been choak'd? But in better Bleſſings, earneſtneſs of Deſire, and fervour of Proſecution, was always anſwered with a Gracious Impetration.

9. THOU art poor in Spirit; but in an humble Dejection, long'ſt for more: Know, that an humble Poverty, is better than a proud Fulneſs: Wert thou Poor and Proud, there were no hope of thy Proficiency: Thy falſe Conception lyes in the way of thy Improvement; and many a one had been Gracious, had they not eſteem'd themſelves: But now thou art Meaner in thine Opinion, than in thine Eſtate, who can more juſtly claim our *Saviours* Bleſſing; *Bleſſed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven?* Mat. 5. 3.

10. THOU art weak in heart: It is thine own Fault, if thou acquir'ſt not more Strength. Wherefore is that Heavenly Food of the Word and Sacraments, but to nouriſh thy Soul to Eternal Life? Do but Eat and Digeſt, and thou wilt grow ſtronger

God

God will not be wanting to thee in an Increaſe of Grace, if thou art not wanting to thy ſelf: He offers his Holy Spirit, with the Means; and it is thy neglect if thou ſeparate 'em. Thou knoweſt in whoſe hands is the Staff of Bread, pray, That he who gives thee Food, and Mouth, would alſo give thee Appetite, Digeſtion, and Nouriſhment.

11. THY Spirit is weak: It concerns thee highly to be cautious, in avoiding occaſions of Temptation. He that carries brittle Glaſſes, is careful leſt they ſhould break; whereas ſtrong Metal fears no danger: So he that has a ſmall Ruſh-Light, walks gently, and keeps off every Air. Thou art weak, thy *God* is ſtrong. Do'ſt thou not ſee the Infant that cannot go alone, how faſt he clings to the hand of his Mother; more truſting to her help, than his own Strength? Do thou ſo to thy *God*; and ſay with the Bleſſed Pſalmiſt; *Hold up my goings in thy Paths, that my Foot-ſteps ſlip not*, Pſal. 17. 5. *Hold thou me up, and I ſhall be ſafe*, Pſal. 119. 117, *Uphold me according to thy Word, that I may live, and let me not be aſhamed of my Hope*, Pſal. 119. 116.

12. St. *Peter* was preſumptuous, in attempting to tread on the Waters: But he that ventured to walk there, upon the Strength of his Faith, when he felt the ſtiff Wind, and ſaw the great Billow, began to ſink in his Weakneſs: But no ſooner had *Jeſus* ſtretch'd forth his hand, and caught him, but he takes Courage, and goes now with the ſame aſſurance upon the Sea, as he on the Land: And with a Check, receives more Supportation from *Chriſt* than his own Limbs could afford him, *Mat.* 14. 29, 30, 31. Fear no Miſcarriage, through thine own weakneſs, whilſt thou art ſupported by that Strong Helper.

A Prayer for Grace.

O LORD, who art the Author of all Goodneſs, and from whom cometh every good and perfect Gift, make me to diſcern aright what Grace thou haſt vouchſafed unto me, and learn me to be truly thankful for the ſame, and to Glorifie thee, the only giver of it; ſo likewiſe to uſe my utmoſt diligence in the performance of thoſe Duties which thou requireſt of me: That when thou ſhalt Summon me to a Reckoning for the uſe of that Talent committed to me, I may give in my Accounts, and be plentifully Rewarded, by entering into that Joy, which thou haſt prepared for all thy Servants.

2. *GRANT that I may ever uſe that meaſure of Grace thou haſt allotted to me, and reſtrain me from turning of it into Wantonneſs: Let me be content with that Portion which thou in thy Wiſdom and Goodneſs haſt endowed me withal, and not plead Ignorance aad contemn its Inſufficiency; neither let me Envy thoſe that have received more, leſt I repine againſt thee; nor deſpiſe thoſe which have attained leſs, leſt I incur thy Diſpleaſure, and cauſe thee in Juſtice, to withdraw that Grace from me, which in Mercy thou haſt freely given me, and beſtow it upon thoſe who would make better uſe of it: But Lord, Sanctifie unto me all thy Gifts and Graces to my Lifes end.* Amen.

SECT. VI.

Loſs of Reputation.

1. NEXT to our Body and Soul, is the Care of our Reputation; which loſt, we are dead to the World. Thou ſuffereſt under a Publick Infamy;

famy; I do not ask how justly: He was wise that said, It was fit for every Good Man to fear a false Reproach: A good Name is no less wounded for the time with that, than with a just Crimination. This is a sore Evil; against which there is no Preservative, nor hardly can be prescrib'd any Remedy: Innocence it self, is no Antidote against Malicious Tongues: Neither Grandeur nor Sanctity, can secure any from unjust Calumny.

2. MIGHT that be any Ease to thee, I could tell thee of *Kings* and *Saints*, that have complain'd of this Misfortune, and yet were not able to resist it. Thou hast the Company of the best, if that mitigates thy Misery. But what do I speak of Mortals, whose greatest Purity might be blurr'd with some Imperfections? Look upon the *Lord of Life, the Eternal Son of the ever living God*, God cloathed in Flesh; and see whether any other were his Lot, in this Region of Mortality: Dost thou not hear for his Gracious Sociableness, branded as *Gluttonous, a Wine-bibber, a Friend of Publicans and Sinners?* Mat. 11. 19. For his Powerful and Merciful Cure of Demoniacks, blazon'd for a Fellow that *Casts out Devils through Beelzebub the Prince of Devils?* Mat. 12. 24. Was not he slandred to death for *Treason against* Cæsar, *and Blasphemy against* God? John 19. 12. Mat. 26. 65. Did not the Multitude say, *He is mad and hath a Devil?* John 10. 20. Was he not after his Death counted an *Impostor? Mat.* 27. 63. And can there be worse Names, than *Glutton, Drunkard, Conjurer*, and *Traytor, Blasphemer, Madman, Demoniack*, and *Impostor*? Who then can think much to be slandered with meaner Crimes, when he hears the Son of God in whom *The Prince of this World could find nothing*, laden with so hainous Calumniations? *John* 14. 30.

3. THOU

3. THOU art ſmitten with a ſordid Tongue; which penetrates into thy Soul. That Perſon gave a high praiſe to his Sword, that affirm'd, It was ſharper than Slander: And if a Razor proves ſharper, yet ſhort of the *Edomites* Tongue, *Pſal.* 52. 2. And if theſe Weapons reach not far enough, he found both *Spears and Arrows* in the Mouths of his Traducers, *Pſal.* 57. 4. Thou art in the ſame Circumſtance with *David*: What ſhould'ſt thou do, but for his Complaint, uſe his Remedy? *I will cry unto* God *moſt high, unto* God *that performeth all things for me: He ſhall ſend from Heav'n, and ſave me from the Reproach of him that would ſwallow me up:* God *ſhall ſend forth his Mercy, and his Truth*, Pſal. 57. 2, 3. Do by thy Reproaches, as *Hezekiah* did by the Railing Lines of *Rabſhakeh*, ſpread them before the *Lord*, and leave thy Cauſe in the juſt hands of the Almighty; who will in his good time, revenge thy Wrong, and clear thine Innocency: and requite thee Good for their Malice and Envy.

4. IN the mean time, thou complain'ſt of being blemiſh'd with an odious Aſperſion, and thy Name repeated by many cenſorious Mouths. Thou hear-eſt what others ſay; but do'ſt thou make a particular Search in thine own Boſom? If thy Conſcience acquit thee, obdure thy Face againſt all Spight of Malice. What is ill Fame, but an unſavory Breath? Do but turn thine Ear from the Reception, and what art thou the worſe? It is thy Weakneſs to ſuffer thy ſelf to be blown over by the Air of ſome putrified Lungs; which if thou doſt but decline, by not valuing it, will ſoon vaniſh.

5. THOU art under ill Tongues: This is an Evil proper only to Man: Other Creatures are ſubject to Diſeaſes, Death, or outward Violence; but they cannot be obnoxious to Detraction, ſince they are not capable of Speech; whereby a Slander can be

be form'd: They have their ſeveral Sounds and Notes of Expreſſion, whereby they ſignifie their Diſlike and Anger: But only Man can cloath his angry Thoughts with Words of Offence; ſo that Faculty, which was given him for an Advantage, is depraved to a further Miſchief. But the Liberal Hand of his Creator, hath alſo endued him with a Property of Reaſon; which as it directs his Tongue to others, ſo it inſtructs him to make uſe of orher Speeches to him: And where he finds it unjuſt, either to convince it by a juſt Apology, or to contemn it. If therefore thou underſtandeſt thy ſelf to lye under an unjuſt Obloquy, have ſo much of the Man as to confute, or deſpiſe it.

6. THOU art ſhamefully traduced: But give me leave to enquire not what thou ſuffereſt, but for what: If for a good Cauſe, I ſhall turn my Pity to Envy: Truth it ſelf hath told thee, Thou art in the way to Bleſſedneſs, who can pity thee for that, wherein thou haſt cauſe to rejoyce? *Bleſſed are ye when Men revile you, and perſecute you, and ſhall ſay all manner of Evil againſt you falſly, for my ſake; rejoyce, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven*, Mat. 5. 11. Rather pluck up thy Spirits, and take up the Reſolution of holy *Job*, that Man of *Patience*: *If mine Adverſary had written a Book againſt me, ſurely I would take it upon my Shoulders, and bind it as a Crown to me*, Job 31. 35, 36. And ſay, with that gracious *King* of *Iſrael*; *I will be yet more vile for the Lord*, 2 Sam. 6. 22.

7. THOU art reproach'd by lewd Men: Thank thy Vertue, that thou art envyed. Wert thou ſo bad as thy Detractors, thou would'ſt ſit quiet enough. *If we were of the World*, (ſaith our *Saviour*) *the World would love his own: But becauſe ye are not of the World, but I have choſen you out of the World; therefore the World hateth you*, John 15. 19. Whilſt

the *Moon* ſets, no Dogs bark at her; it is her Shining that opens their Mouths: Wert thou Obſcure or Wicked, thou mighteſt be ſafe; but if thou wilt be eminently Good, look for the Laſhes of ill Tongues. *They think it ſtrange, that you run not with them into the ſame Exceſs of Riot, ſpeaking Evil of you,* ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Pet.* 4. 4.

8. IT was not without Reaſon, that a great Muſician ſtruck his Schollar, becauſe the Multitude applauded his Skill; knowing, that had he been true to his Art, thoſe miſ-judging Ears could not have approved him. What more excellent Inſtruments had *God* in his Church, than the Bleſſed *Apoſtles*? And what Acceptation found they on the Earth? *Being defamed, we intreat: We are made as the Filth of the World, and are the Off-ſcouring of all things unto this Day: We are made a Spectacle to the World, to Angels, and to Men,* 1 Cor. 4. 9, 13. Complain, if thou canſt, of a worſe Condition than theſe Ambaſſadors of *God*; otherwiſe, reſolve with the Holy Apoſtle, to paſs cheerfully through Honor and Diſhonor, through evil Report, and good Report, towards the Goal of Immortality.

9. THOU art diſgrac'd through ſland'rous Reports: It is not Air we live by. How many haſt thou known, that have blown over a juſt Infamy, with a careleſs Neglect? Pleaſing themſelves to think, they are thriven under Curſes: And ſhall their Guiltineſs be entertain'd with more Courage than thine Innocence? Let thoſe whoſe heart is as foul as their Names, be troubled with deſerved Cenſures: Do not thou give way to Malice, as to yield any Regard to her miſ-raiſed Suggeſtions. Thou canſt not deviſe more to vex a Detractor, than by Contempt. Thus thou ſhalt force Spight, as that wiſe *Heathen* truly ſaid, to drink of the greateſt Part of her own Poyſon.

10. THOU

10. THOU art diſgrac'd with an ill Fame: What a poor matter is this? How far doſt thou think that Sound reacheth? Perhaps to the next Village; or Shire wherein thou dwelleſt: It is like, the next County never heard of thy Name: And if thou look yet further off; as ſoon may'ſt thou be diſcourſed amongſt the *Antipodes*, as in the Neighbouring Region. And what a ſmall Spot of Earth is this, to which thy Shame is confined? Did'ſt thou know the vaſt Extent of this great World, thou would'ſt eaſily ſee into how narrow a Corner either our Glory, or Diſhonour, can be ſhut up: And ſhould'ſt confeſs how little Reaſon we have to affect the One, or be diſheartned with the Other.

11. THOU art wronged with an unjuſt diſgrace: Have *Patience*; Slanders are not long liv'd: Truth is the Child of Time; ere long ſhe'll appear and vindicate thee. Wait upon the *God* of Truth, who ſhall cauſe *Thy Light to break forth as the Morning*; *and thine Health to ſpring forth ſpeedily*, Iſa. 58. 8. There is a Shame, worthy of thy Fear; which is both Univerſal, before the Face of all the World, of Angels and Men; and beyond the reach of Time, Eternal: Fear This, and contemn the Other.

12. ON the contrary; If Fame ſhould be-friend thee ſo much, as to ſtrain her Cheeks in ſounding thy Praiſes; and ſhould cry thee up for Vertuous, and Eminent every way: *Alas! how few ſhall hear her, and how ſoon is that Noiſe ſtilled, and forgotten?* Eccleſ. 9. 16. Shortly, Then let it be thy main Care, to demean thy ſelf holily and conſcionably before *God* and Men; leave the reſt upon *God*, who ſhall be ſure to make his Word good, in ſpight of Men and Devils: *The Memory of the Juſt ſhall be bleſſed, but the Name of the Wicked ſhall rot*, Prov. 10. 7.

A Prayer upon loſs of Reputation.

O Lord, withdraw my heart I beſeech thee daily, more and more from the love of the World, and the things thereof, ſeeing they are Vain, Tranſitory and full of Grief and Vexation, not yielding that delight and Contentment which they promiſe by their fawning Allurements: But on the Contrary much anguiſh and unquietneſs of Mind: Witneſs the cauſe of ſuch unexpected bitterneſs; ſuffer me not to affect them as formerly, nor let them ſeem ſo ſweet and pleaſant to me, as they do to others, who have not taſted of better things, and therefore find ſuch reliſh in theſe; but grant that all the affections of my heart may be fixed upon thee alone.

2. *REPROACH and Shame, O Lord, hath now Encompaſſed me, and it hath been thy Juſtice to make others behold the Weakneſs of thy Servant, and to cauſe my wants, Imperfections, and Infirmities to be known and diſcerned of many; Lord, thou knoweſt how ready I am to fail, if thy Grace doth not continually ſuſtain me: O let me not be overwhelm'd with grief, that others may behold that in me which creates this diſreſpect, but make me every day careful to walk Circumſpectly, and to Redeem that Time I have ſo vainly loſt, that at laſt I may by hearty Repentance, and the Merits of a bleſſed Jeſus, be received into thy Favour.* Amen.

SECT. VII.

Of Publick Calamities.

1. THOU art afflicted with the Publick Calamities; So it becomes thee as a good Man, a good Chriſtian, and a good Patriot. We are not entire

entire Pieces, but Limbs of a Community of Church and Kingdom: While the whole Body ſuffers, how can we be free? This ſhould be no News to us: What Earthly Kingdom or State hath ever enjoy'd a conſtant Felicity? Theſe Publick Bodies, like ſingle Perſons, have their Birth, Infancy, Youth, Vigour, and Declinations: Even the White Marble of that famous Emblem, and Type of *God*'s Church, after not many Centuries of Years, felt the Dint of Time, and Mould'red to nothing.

2. IT is as much as Heavenly Bodies can do, to avoid Mutation: And well might be diſtracted with theſe Troubles, if we did not know from whence they come; even from a moſt Wiſe, Powerful, and juſt Providence: He that ſits in Heaven, orders theſe Earthly Affairs according to the Counſel of his Will: It is that Almighty Hand, that holds the Stern of this Veſſel, and ſteers it in that Courſe he knows beſt: It is not for us Paſſengers, to meddle with Card or Compaſs: Let that All-skilful Pilot alone with his Work: He knows every Rock and Shelf, that may endanger it; and can cut the proudeſt Billow, that threatens it; *It is the* Lord, *let him do what ſeemeth him good*, 1 Sam. 3. 18.

3. WERE there no other reſpects than Perſonal, I cannot blame thee, if thy Fears ſtrive with thy Grief for the Publick Evils: Every Man's Intereſt is involv'd in the Common; and if the Ship Sink, what will become of the Paſſengers? But withal, there is a kind of inbred Sympathy in every good heart, which gives a Share in all Miſeries, and affects us more for them, than our own. Old indulgent *Eli* lov'd his Sons well, and was no doubt very ſenſible of their Death; yet that part of the News paſſed over with ſome Paſſion: But when he heard *the Ark of God was taken*, his Neck and Heart were

broke together: And his Religious Daughter-in-Law, though ſhe were Delivered of a Son; yet ſhe died in Travel of that heavy News, and could live only to ſay, *Ichabod*; *the Glory is departed from* Iſrael; *for the Ark of* God *is taken*, 1 Sam. 4. 17, 18, 21, 22. diſregarding her new Son, when ſhe heard of the Loſs of her People, and her *God*.

4. HOW many *Pagans* have we read of, that have died reſolutely for their Country, cheerfully ſacrificing themſelves to the Publick? How many that died with their Country, hating to out-live the common Ruin? How many have Scorn'd to be beholden for their Lives to their Peoples Murtherers? We ſhall as ſoon extinguiſh Grace and Nature, as quit this Compaſſionate Senſe of the Common Calamities.

5. THOU grieveſt for the Publick Diſtempers: Mourn not as one without Faith: Be ſure, *He that keepeth* Iſrael, *will neither ſlumber nor ſleep*, Pſal. 121. 4. Wherefore was *The Holy Tabernacle over ſpread with Skins*, but to figure to us *God*'s Church, ſhelt'red under a ſure Protection? *Exod.* 26. 7. He that was ſo curious of the Cuſtody of his Material Temple, by Night as well as by Day, that a ſleeping *Levite* might not eſcape beating, and burning of Garments; how careful do we think, he will be of his Spiritual, and Living Houſe? How unmeet Judges are we of his Holy Proceedings? We are ready to meaſure his Love by an outward Proſperity, than which nothing can be more uncertain?

6. THE *Almighty* goes by other Rules; ſuch as are moſt Conſonant to his Infinite Juſtice and Mercy. I am abaſh'd to hear a *Pagan*, though no Vulgar one, ſay; *Whatſoever is brought to paſs, a wiſe Man thinks ought to be ſo done; neither goes about to rebuke Nature; But finds it beſt to ſuffer what he cannot alter:*

Senec. *Epiſt.* 107.

And

And ſhall we Chriſtians repine at thoſe ſeemingly harſh Events, which we ſee fall out in *God*'s Church, whil'ſt we are ignorant of his Deſigns? and be ready to bleſs a thriving Prophaneneſs? Behold the antient Lot of *God*'s Inheritance, and thou ſhalt ſee the Father of *Eſau* Flouriſhing, yielding eight *Kings* of his Line; whil'ſt poor *Iſrael* was toyling and ſweating in the *Ægyptian* Furnaces: Yet we know the World to ſtand inviolable; *The Elder ſhall ſerve the Younger*; and, *Jacob have I loved, but Eſau have I hated.*

7. WHAT if that Wiſe *God*, (who brings Light out of Darkneſs) have purpoſed to diſpenſe Honor and Happineſs to his Church out of this ſad Affliction? Metals are never ſo bright, as when poliſh'd: Perfumes and Spices never ſo Redolent, as when they have endur'd the Fire, and Peſtle. Wilt thou not give the *Phyſician* leave to make uſe of *Mithridate*, becauſe there are *Vipers* in the Compoſition? How unworthy art thou of Health, if thou wilt not truſt the Skill of the Artiſt, in mixing ſo wholeſome a Cordial?

8. THOU art troubled with the Publick Miſeries: Take heed that thy Grief be clear of all Impiety. Would'ſt thou not have *God* to be Juſt; and allow it an Act of his Juſtice to puniſh Sins? Can'ſt thou deny, that our Sins have reacht to Heaven, and call'd for Judgment? *Wherefore doth a Living Man complain? a Man for the puniſhment of his Sin?* Lam. 3. 39. I read of a Devout Man, that was inſtant with *God* in his Prayers, for a Nation not far off: And was anſwer'd; *Suffer the Proud to be humbled.* Whether we ſuffer it or no, the juſt *God* will humble the Proud, and puniſh the Sinful. The wonderful *Patience*, and infinite Juſtice of the *Almighty*, hath ſet Limits to the Wickedneſs of every People. *The Iniquities of the* Amorites *is not yet at*

the full, ſaith *God* to *Abraham*, Gen. 15. 16. When the Meaſures is made up, it is time for *God* to ſtrick; Then we complain, when perhaps 'tis too late.

9. WOULD'ST thou know what Remedy is to be us'd, for preventing of a Deſtructive Vengeance? There is no way under Heav'n, but to break off our Sins by a ſeaſonable, ſerious Repentance: By the united Forces of Holy Reſolutions, and Endeavours to make an Head againſt our Wickedneſſes, and not to ſuffer it to fill up to the Brim of that fatal *Epah*; till which time, the Long-ſuffering *God* only threatens, and corrects a People: But then he plagues them; and inſiſts upon the neceſſity of his inviolable Juſtice. *Shall I not viſit for theſe things, ſaith the* Lord? *And ſhall not my Soul be avenged on ſuch a Nation as this?* Jer. 5. 9.

10. THOU mourneſt for the common Sufferings: And indeed our Fears can never be better beſtowed But have not thy Sins helped to make up this irritating Heap, and thou caſt in thy Symbole into the common Shot? Cannot the Times juſtly challenge thee as acceſſary to their Miſery? Begin at Home, if thou wiſh well to the Publick, and make thine own Peace with *God*, for thy particular Offences: Renew the Covenant with *God*, of a holy and ſtrict Obedience; and then pour out thy Prayers and Tears for an univerſal Mercy: Then thou wilt not only pull away one Brand from this Conſuming Fire, but aſſiſt to quench the common Conflagration.

11. THY Heart bleeds to ſee the woful Vaſtation of Civil Diſcord, and the deadly fury of domeſtick Enemies: Certainly there is nothing under Heaven more dreadful than the Face of an Inteſtine War; nothing that ſo nearly reſembles Hell: Killing, Dying, Torturing, Burning, Shrieks, Cries, and Ejaculations, fearful Sounds, and furious Violences,

lences, and whatſoever may increaſe Horror: The preſent Calamity oppreſſes one, another Fear: One is quivering in Death, another trembles to expect it: One begs for Life, another will ſell it dearer: Here one would reſcue one Life, and loſeth two; another would hide himſelf where he finds a Mercileſs Death. Here lies one bleeding, groaning and graſping, parting with his Soul inextremity of Anguiſh; and another of a Vigorous Spirit kills and dies at once: Here one wrings her Hands, tears her Hair, and ſeeks for ſome Inſtrument of a ſelf-inflicted Death, rather than yield her Chaſtity to a bloody Raviſher; another clings to her Husband, and takes part of the Murtherers Sword, rather than let go her Embraces: One is tortured for the Diſcovery of hid Treaſure; another dying upon the Rack, out of Jealouſie.

12. IT is pity that Chriſtians ſhould be ſo bloodily Cruel to one another! That he who bears the *Image* of *God*, ſhould thus turn Fiend to his own Fleſh and Blood! Theſe are worthy of our bittereſt Lamentations! I love the Speculation of *Seneca*'s Reſolutely-Wiſe Man, that could look upon the glittering Sword of an Executioner, with undazled Eyes, and makes it indifferent whether his Soul paſs out of his Mouth or Throat: But I ſhould more admire the Practice. Whilſt we carry this Clay about us, Nature in the beſt of us, muſt ſhrink in at the ſight of Death: Yet theſe are the due Revenges of the *Almighty*'s Punitive Juſtice, ſo provok'd by our Sins, that we cannot claim an eaſier Judgment. *Senec.* Epiſt. 76.

13. DOST thou not ſee *Phyſicians* when the Body is highly Diſtemper'd and the Blood Inflam'd, to order the opening of a Vein, and extracting out ſo many ounces as may leave the reſt fit for Cor-

Correction? Why art thou over-troubled to ſee the great *Phyſician* of the World take this Courſe with ſinful Mankind? Certainly, had not this great Body, by wilful Diſorder, contracted theſe Spiritual Diſeaſes, and defiled the Blood that runs in theſe Vulgar Veins, with Riots and Surfeits, we had never been ſo Miſerable, as to ſee theſe Torrents of Chriſtian Blood running down our Channels: But could we bewail and abandon our former Wickedneſſes, we might live in hope, that at laſt this deadly Iſſue might ſtop, and dry up, and leave a Poſſibility of a Bleſſed Recovery.

14. THOU art amaz'd with Grief, to ſee the Peſtilence raging in our Streets, in ſo frequent a Mortality, as breeds a queſtion concerning the number of the Living and the Dead: That which is wont to abate other Miſeries, heightens this; the Company of Participants: It was certainly a hard and ſad Option, that *God* gave to *David*, after his numbring the People: *Chuſe thee whether Seven Years Famine ſhall come unto thee in thy Land, or three Months Flight before thine Enemies, or two days Peſtilence*, 2 Sam. 24. 13. We may believe him when we hear him ſay, *I am in a great Strait*; but his wiſe Reſolutions ſoon brought him out: *Let us fall now into the hands of the Lord, (for his Mercies are great) And let me not fall into the hands of Man*, 2 Sam. 24. 14. He that ſent theſe Evils, knew their Value, and the difference of their Malignity.

15. YET he oppoſes three days Peſtilence, to ſeven Years Famine, and three Months Vanquiſhment: He knew there was advantage betwixt the dull Activity of Man, and the quick Diſpatch of an Angel! It was a favour that the Angel, who in *One Night* deſtroy'd an *Hudred fourſcore and five thouſand Aſſyrians*, 2 King. 19. 35. ſhould in three days cut off but *Seventy thouſand Iſraelites*: But

But the *Almighty* in his Judgments remembers Mercy. We read of *Grand Cairo*, wherein Eighteen hundred thouſand were ſwept away in one Years Peſtilence; enough one would imagine, to have De-Populated the whole Earth: And in our Chronicles of ſo general a Mortality, that the Living were hardly ſufficient to Bury the Dead. In the Year, 1624, died of the Plague in one Week, Four thouſand four hundred ſixty three; and in our laſt Viſitation, 1665, was a larger Number: In one Week, Seven thouſand one hundred ſixty and five; and in the whole Year, Sixty eight thouſand five hundred ninety ſix. It was his tender Mercy, that he ſpared any Alive: But he Wounds, that he may Heal; and in wounding, heals us; for his Compaſſions fails not to us Sinners.

16. THESE are dreadful demonſtrations of *God*'s Diſpleaſure; but there is this alleviation of our Miſery, that we ſuffer more immediately from a Holy, Juſt and Merciful God. The Kingly Prophet had never made that diſtinction in his Choice, if he had not known a difference betwixt the Sword of an Angel, and an Enemy; betwixt *God*'s more direct and immediate Infliction, and the Malice of Men. It was but a poor Conſolation given by a Victorious Enemy to dying *Lauſus*; *Comfort thy ſelf in thy Death with this, that thou falleſt by the Hand of* Æneas. But ſurely, we have juſt Reaſon to Comfort our Souls, when a Peſtilential Death compaſſes us about, from the Thought and Intuition of that Gracious Hand, under which we ſuffer: So as we can ſay with good *Eli*, *It is the Lord.*

17. IT is not amiſs to nominate thoſe Marks of Infection, *God*'s *Tokens*; ſuch they are, and ought to Summon up our Eyes and Hearts to that Almighty Power that ſends them, with the Reſolution of Holy *Job*; *Tho thou kill me, yet will I truſt*

in thee. It is none of the leaſt Miſeries of Contagious Sickneſs, for it bars us from the Comfortable Society and Attendance of Friends; or elſe repays their Love, and kind Viſitation with Death. Be not diſmaid with this Solitude; thou haſt Company with thee, whom no Infection can indanger or exclude: There is an inviſible Friend, that will be ſure to adhere to thee, though thou art avoided by Neighbours; and *will make all thy Bed in thy Sickneſs*, and ſupply thee with thoſe Cordials, which thou in vain expect'ſt from earthly Viſitants.

18. INDEED, juſtly do we ſtile this *Sickneſs*; for the Mortalneſs, and Generality of the Diſperſion: Yet there is a Remedy, that can cure and confine it: Let but every one inſpect the Plague of his own heart, and the Land is healed. Can we, with *David*, ſee the Angel that ſmites us, and erect an Altar; and offer *God* the Sacrifices of our Prayers, Penitence and Obedience, we ſhall hear him ſay, *It is enough*, 2 Sam. 24. 16. His Mercies are everlaſting, and Remedies certain: Be we but Penitent, we cannot be Miſerable.

19. WE ſoon forgot this Viſitation; loſs of Friends, and God's Judgments, (and thought, with fooliſh *Agag*, that *Surely the Bitterneſs of Death is paſt*, 1 Sam. 15. 32.) and provok'd him ſtill to Wrath againſt us; we muſt have after our Contagion, a Purgation by *Fire*; which the beſt *Naturaliſts* ſay, is a proper Remedy againſt Infection; the *Almighty* ſeeing it neceſſary to uſe this Preſcription, prepar'd it into a Medicine: That great Conflagration, which conſum'd moſt part of our City to Aſhes: It was dreadful to behold, and made moſt tremble; yet what ſigns of Remorſe do we ſhew? What Vanity (I fear I may ask, what Vice) have we ſubſtracted, upon the Senſe of God's Anger? What nicety

nicety in Cloaths or Diet have we cut off, in ſympathy with the Nakedneſs and Hunger of our afflicted Brethren? Nay, do not the unreaſonable Jollities among us look as if we triumpht in their Miſeries, found Muſick in the Diſcordant Sound of their Groans, and our own Laughter; and emulated that infamous Barbarity of *Nero*, who play'd while *Rome* burn'd? 'Tis mention'd by the Prophet, as a moſt prepoſt'rous thing, a kind of impious Soleciſm, to revel under the Menace of Judgments: *Amos* 4. 11. *I have over-thrown ſome of you, as* God *over-threw* Sodom *and* Gomorrah, *and ye were as a Fire-brand pluckt out of the Burning: yet have ye not return'd to me, ſaith the Lord.*

20. FIRE is the *Eagle* in Nature; nothing in the Elementary World mounts ſo high to its Place, and ſtoops ſo low to its Prey: The two Properties God himſelf aſcribes to that Bird, *Job* 39. 27, 30. And if we ſtill refuſe obſtinately to be gather'd like Chickins under our Lord's Wings, he can again let looſe this Bird of Prey, this *Eagle* of Heaven, upon us: and from the Eaſt, where it began before, flie it home like Lightning even to the utmoſt Weſt, to ſeize and to devour where-ever there is the leaſt Quarry remaining.

21. NEXT, *Gebal*, and *Ammon*, and *Amalek*, and the reſt that *Hell*, and *Rome*, and their Partizans, our Enemies on all hands, both Foreign and Domeſtick, have been ſo long Confederate againſt us, ſaying; *Come, and let us root them out, that they be no more a People*; that the Name of that Reformed Church of *England*, may be no more in remembrance: They have often attempted to bring about their malicious Deſigns; and yet have not been able to ſeize us: To what can we juſtly aſcribe all this, but to the gracious Protection of the Almighty, to whom we muſt fly for Defence and Aid.

22. AND

22. AND now, when reſtleſs and unquiet Men, (the true Spawn of him, whoſe Tail drew the third part of the Stars of Heaven, and caſt them to the Earth) would fain by their Helliſh Plots and Contrivances, bring us down again from thence, even down to the Ground, and lay our Honor in the Duſt: When by their ſecret Machinations they are at work on all ſides to hurry us back into the old Confuſions; in hope, that out of that diſorder'd Maſs, they may at length rear up a new World of their own; but what a World? A World made up of a new Heaven of Superſtitions and Idolatries: A new Earth too of Anarchy firſt and pretended Liberty; but of Tyranny inſufferable, at the next Remove.

23. IN ſuch a dangerous State of Affairs as this, whether ſhould we, (nay, whether elſe can we (ſeek for Help and Deliverance, but under his Protections; the ſtretching out of whoſe Arms of Providence, fills the Breadth of thy Land, O *England*! He can make theſe Cockatrice Eggs; on which this Generation of Vipers (that eat out the the Bowels of their Mother) have ſat ſo long a-brood, windy and addle: So that out of the Serpents Root, ſhall never proceed an Adder to bite us, or a fiery flying Serpent to Devour us. He can confound theſe *Babel* Builders, with their City, Tower and Temple; their Foreign Policy, and ſtrange Worſhip; their Novel Modes, and Models of Government in Church and State, and ſcatter them abroad from hence upon the Face of the Earth, like as a Dream when one awaketh: So ſhall he deſpiſe their *Images* and their Imaginations too, and make their whole Contrivance conſume away like a Snail, and *Become like the untimely Fruit of a Woman, which ſhall never ſee the Sun.*

24. AND And now let us cry mightily unto *God*, and ſay, Remember not, *Lord*, our Offences, nor the Offences of our Fore-Fathers, neither take thou Vengeance of our Sins: Spare us good Lord, ſpare thy People, whom thou haſt Redeemed with thy moſt Precious Blood; and be not angry with us for ever. *And* good *Lord*, deliver us from Lightning and Tempeſt; from Plague, Peſtilence, Famine and Fire; from Battle and Murder, and from ſudden Death: From all Sedition and Faction, Privy Conſpiracy and Rebellion; from all falſe Doctrin, Hereſie and Schiſm; from hardneſs of Heart, and Contempt of the World and Commandment, *Libera nos Domine.*

A Prayer in time of Publick Calamity.

O *THOU God of Juſtice, I humbly beſeech thee, in this thy Wrath, to remember Mercy: We confeſs O Lord, our Guilt flaſheth in our Faces, and Woe unto us, for we have Sinned: We have not kept the way of the Lord, but perfidiouſly departed from thee our God; the Wiſe hath truſted in his Wiſdom, the Strong in his Strength, and the Rich in his Riches: Thus have we brought our ſelves under the Curſe, by truſting in the Arm of Fleſh, and the Ballances of Deceit are in our Hands, and throughout the whole courſe of our Lives, we have wrought a deceitful Work.*

2. *BUT, O God, bow down thy Ear unto our Prayers; attend unto the voice of our Supplications; create in us new Hearts, O God, and renew right Spirits within us: We have all been Examples of Sin; O make us all Examples of Reformation, that old things may paſs away, and all things may become new. Deliver us, O Lord, from theſe Publick Calamities which we ſo Righteouſly have deſerved, and let not thy Diſpleaſure ariſe*

any

any more against us; and grant that we may serve thee for the future, in Holiness and Righteousness, all the days of our Lives. Amen.

SECT. VIII.

Loss of Friends.

1. THOU hast lost thy *Friend*: Thy Sorrow is just; the Earth hath nothing more precious, than what thou hast parted with: For what is a *Friend*, but a Man's self? A Soul divided in two Bodies, and animated by the same Spirit. It is somewhat worse with thee than a Palsied Man, whose half is stricken with Numbness; he hath lost but the use of one side of his Body, thou the half of thy Soul: Or may I not with assurance say, that a true *Friend* hath two Souls in one Body; his Own and his *Friend's*; It was so with *Jonathan* and *David*; *The Soul of* Jonathan *was knit with the Soul of* David; *and* Jonathan *lov'd him as his own Soul*, 1 Sam. 18. 1.

2. STILL the more Goodness, the stronger Union; Nature can never so fast Cement Souls as Grace: For here the Union is wrought by a better Spirit than our own; even that blessed Spirit who stiles himself *Love*, 1 Joh. 4. 18. The greater thine Affection, the heavier thy Loss: But let me tell the, I fear thou art accessary to thine own Affliction: Didst thou expect this Loss? Did thy Heart say, What if we should part? Didst thou not over-enjoy this Blessing? If so, these are no small Disadvantages.

3. AS every Evil, so this especially is aggravated by our Unexpectation: Neither hadst thou been

been ſo oppreſſed with Sorrow: if thou hadſt foreſeen it: It is our weak inconſideration if we welcome theſe Earthly Comforts not as Gueſts, but Inmates, ſome are importunately Hoſpitable, to entertain their Friends, that they have no power to let 'em Depart: Whereas, we ought according to the Advice of *Seneca*, to poſſeſs 'em, as thoſe that make account to fore-go 'em, and fore-go 'em as if we poſſeſt 'em. And the Apoſtle St. *Paul* gives us this Advice, to *Uſe this World as if we us'd it not; for the faſhion of this world paſſeth away*, 1 Cor. 7. 30, 31.

4. THOU art griev'd for the loſs of a Dear *Friend*: Take heed, leſt thy Love had too much of Humanity, and too little of the Deity. All Bleſſings as they flow from the Father of Mercies, ſhould be enjoy'd in him: But if we enjoy 'em as in themſelvs, our Love degenerates into Carnal. It is a ſure Rule, that Love depends upon the thing affected; but when that ceaſeth, Love is Extinguiſh'd: As he that loves a Face for Beauty, when Deformity appears, it cools his Affection: He that reſpects a Man for Bounty, diſregards him when he is Impoveriſh'd.

5. DID'ST thou value thy *Friend* for Wit, Complaiſance and kind Offices? All theſe are loſt, and thy Love with them: But if thou didſt affect him for Eminency in Goodneſs, for the ſake of *God* that dwelt in him, thy Love cannot be loſt; becauſe thou enjoy'ſt *God*, in whom thou loved'ſt him. Comfort thy ſelf therefore in *God*, in whom he was thine, and yielded him cheerfully into thoſe Hands, from whom thou receiv'ſt him.

6. THOU haſt loſt a true *Friend*: That Jewel was to be priz'd for the rarity of it. The World affords Friends enough, ſuch as they are: Friends of the Purple, as *Tertullian* calls them; Friends of the Basket, as the Poet nominates them; ſuch as

love thy Loaves and Fishes, and thee for them. *Wealth makes many Friends*, saith the Wise Man, *Prov.* 14. 20. and *Chap.* 19. 4. But where is the Man, that loves thee for thy self, for being Vertuous, divested of all By-respects? Whil'st there is Honey in thy Pot, the Wasps and Flies will be buzzing about it; but the Honey being gone, the Vessel remains quiet.

7. WAS he so much thine, as not to leave thee in Adversity? Did he honour thee, when the World despised thee? Did he follow with Applause, whilst thou wert hooted at by the Multitude? Would he have own'd thee, if he had found thee stripped and wounded in the Wilderness? Such a *Friend* is worthy of thy Tears: But take heed, thy Love prove not envious. If God hath thought him fitter for Society of Saints and Angels, dost thou repine at his happiness? Thou hast lost his Presence; he is advanc'd to the Beatifical Presence of the *King* of Glory: Now Whether is thy Loss, or his Gain the greater.

8. THOU hast lost thy *Friend*: Say rather, Thou hast parted with him. That is properly lost, which is past Recovery, and past hopes to see any more: It is not so with this *Friend* thou mourn'st for: He is but gone Home before thee; and thou art following him: You will both meet in your Father's House, and enjoy each other more happily, than you could have done here below. How just is that Charge of the Blessed Apostle; *That we should not mourn as Men without Hope, for those that do but sleep in Jesus*, 1 Thess. 4. 13, 14. Did we think their Souls vanish't into Air, (as that Heathen Poet prophanely expresseth it) and their Bodies resolv'd into Dust, without all Possibility of Reparation, we might weep out our Eyes for the utter Extinction of those we lov'd: But if *They do* but *sleep*, *they shall do* well

well, John 11. 12. Why are we Impatient for their Repoſal in the Bed of Earth, when aſſured of their waking to Glory?

9. THOU haſt loſt a Dear *Wife, the Wife of thy Youth, the deſire of thine Eyes*, Prov. 5. 18. Iſa. 54. 6. Ezek. 24. 16. Did you not take each other upon Terms of Re-delivery, when call'd for? Were you not, in Uniting, put in mind of Diſſolution? *Till Death us do part.* Was ſhe Vertuous? Knoweſt thou not, there was a Pre-Contract betwixt *Chriſt* and her Soul, ere thou could'ſt Claim her Body? And canſt thou grudge his Challange of his own? Wilt thou not allow him to call for a Conſummation of that happy Match? Did'ſt thou ſo affect her, that thou would'ſt not have her Soul Glorious? If thou loved'ſt her not as a Man, but a Chriſtian, envy her not that better Husband, who for her Dowry, gives Immortality.

10. THY *Son* is dead: What marvel is it, that a Mortal *Father* hath begot a Mortal *Son*? Marvel rather, that thou haſt liv'd to enjoy, and loſe a *Son*. We lie open to ſo many Caſualties, that our Subſiſtence is almoſt Miraculous. Thou haſt loſt a piece of thy ſelf: For what are Children, but Colonies deduced from our Fleſh; yea, rather, our ſelves in other Models. This loſs cannot but go near thee: But what was the Diſpoſition of the *Son* thou mourneſt for? If graceleſs, and debauch'd, as thy Shame, ſo thy ſorrow ſhould die with him. Place the hopes thou might'ſt have had of his Reclaiming, againſt the Fears of his increaſing in Wickedneſs, and thou could'ſt have made no other Account, but of Diſhonour and Diſcomfort.

11. IF it be ſad, that he is taken away in his Wildneſs; it had been more heavy, had he added to the heap of Sin, to augment his Torments. If he were Gracious, he hath a better Father than thy

ſelf, whoſe Intereſt was more in him, than thine: And if that Heavenly Father have thought good to prefer him to a Crown of Immortal Glory, why ſhould'ſt thou be afflicted with his Advancement? Why ſhould'ſt thou not rather rejoyce, that thy Loyns have aſſiſted to furniſh Heav'n with a Saint? Were it put to thy Choice, that thy *Son* might be call'd from his Bleſſed Reſt, and return to his Earthly Relations; Could'ſt thou be ſo injurious, as to wiſh the Miſery of ſo diſadvantagious a Change to to that Soul; which, as it was never of thy Production, ſo it were pity it ſhould be at thy diſpoſing? Rather labour to have thine own Soul ſo diſpoſed, that it may be ready to follow him into thoſe Bleſſed Manſions, and that it may love and long for Heaven ſo much more to dwell among the Spirits of the Juſt made perfect.

A Prayer againſt Immoderate Grief for the Loſs of Friends

O GOD, the God of the Spirits of all Fleſh, thou killeſt and makeſt alive, thou bringeſt to the Grave, and bringeſt back again: And foraſmuch as it hath pleaſed thee to take from us out of this Sinful World the Soul of this thy Servant, * *grant that our grief for this affliction may not be immoderate whereby we may diſpleaſe thee, or ſo overwhelm us, that we make our ſelves unfit for thy ſervice; but ſanctifie, we beſeech thee, unto us this thy Fatherly Correction, that we may endeavour to live every day, as if it were to be our laſt, that when we are Summoned and Arreſted by the hand of Death, We may not be affrighted, by that King of Terrors.*

* Here name the Particular Perſon.

2. *LORD, we are here in a ſtate of baniſhment, and abſent from thee, O take us where we ſhall for ever be-*

hold

hold thy Face, and follow the Lamb whether ſoever he goeth; and that at the laſt hour we may pronounce with a good Conſcence, we have fought a good fight, we have finiſhed our Ceurſe, we have kept the Faith, henceforth, there is laid up for us a Crown of Righteouſneſs, which God the Righteous Judge will freely give to thoſe that Love and Fear him, and truſt in his Mercy, Amen.

SECT. IX.

Of Poverty.

1. THOU art driv'n to Indigency, and which is worſe, out of abundance: Thoſe Evils we have been inur'd to from our Cradle, are grown ſo familiar, that we are little moved with their Preſence: But thoſe into which we fall ſuddenly, out of an external Felicity of Eſtate, overwhelm us. Let thy Care be, not to want thoſe Riches, which ſhall make thy Soul happy; and thou ſhalt not be troubled with the loſs of theſe mean and periſhing Trifles. Had theſe been true Riches, they could not have been loſt: For that Good that is leaſt capable of Loſs, and unſatisfying in an imperfect Fruition, ſo in the loſing it turns Evil.

2. DID'ST thou not know, *That Riches have Wings to fly away?* Prov. 23. 5. And of what uſe is Wings, if not to flie? If any Man's Violence ſhall clip thoſe Wings, they take their flight. Set thy heart upon that Supream Wealth, which cannot be taken from thee, which ſhall never leave thee, nor forſake thee; then thou mayſt eaſily ſlight theſe poor Loſſes. As theſe were not Goods, ſo they were not thine: Here thou foundeſt them, and here

leav'ſt them: For the Apoſtle *Timothy* informs us, 1 Tim. 6,7. *We brought nothing into this World; and it is certain, we can carry nothing out.* What had'ſt thou but their uſe? Neither can they be otherwiſe thine Heirs, whom thou leaveſt behind thee. I am aſham'd, to hear the *Philoſopher* ſay, All I poſſeſs I carry about me; when many Chriſtians hug thoſe things which are ſo Tranſitory.

3. IT was an unanſwerable Queſtion, *God* moved to the Rich Man in the Parable, upon parting with his Soul: *Then whoſe ſhall thoſe things be, which thou haſt provided?* Luke 12,20. Perhaps a Strangers, or (as in the Caſe of undiſpoſed Lands) the Occupants, falſe Executors, or an Enemies. Call that thine own thou art ſure to carry with thee; that may accompany thy Soul, or follow it: Such as thy Holy Graces, Charitable Works, Vertuous Actions, and Heavenly Diſpoſitions: Theſe are Treaſures, which thou ſhalt *Lay up for thy ſelf in Heaven, where neither Moth nor Ruſt doth Corrupt; and where Thieves do not break through, nor ſteal*, Mat. 6.20.

4. THOU haſt loſt thy Goods: May I not rather ſay, Thou haſt reſtor'd 'em? He parted with more, that ſaid; *The* Lord *hath given, and the* Lord *hath taken*, Job 1. 21. Whether by Patrimony, or Providence, or Induſtry, the *Lord* gave it; and whether by the *Chaldeans* or *Sabeans*, the *Lord* hath taken it; and he did but give, and takes his own. What Reaſon haſt thou then to complain? It was not giv'n, but lent thee for a while, till it were call'd for? And do'ſt thou grudge to reſtore what thou borroweſt? Nay, (that thou mayſt have leſs Claim to this Talent) was it not left in thy hand, by the Owner, to employ it for his Uſe, till he ſhould redemand it, with the Increaſe? Thou wert only entruſted to improve, and account for it. If others have taken off thy Charge, by thy impoveriſhment, they have eaſed thee.

5. **THY** Wealth is gone: But if thou haſt Neceſſaries left? Be thankful for what thou haſt, and forget what thou didſt poſſeſs. Hadſt thou had plenty, thou couldſt have uſed no more than Nature calls for; the reſt could have but lain by thee, for readineſs of Imployment: Do but forbear the Thought of Superfluities, and what art thou the worſe? Perhaps thy Fare is courſer, Diſhes fewer, Utenſils meaner, Apparel homelier, and thy Train ſhorter; But how is thy Mind affected? Contentment conſiſts not in Quantities, nor Qualities, but in the inward Diſpoſition of the Heart; that multiplies Numbers, and raiſes Prizes; turns courſe Freezes into rich Velvets, Pulſe into Delicates, and makes one Attendant many Officers.

6. **WISE** *Seneca* tells thee, the true Mould of Wealth is our Body, as the Laſt is of the Shoe; if the Shoe be too big for the Foot, it is troubleſome and uſeleſs: It is Fitneſs, that is regarded here, not Magnitude: And this is the Charge of the Bleſſed Apoſtle; *Having Food and Rayment, let us there with be content*, 1 Tim. 6. 8. And if we have no more, we ſhall be but as we were, and as we ſhall be: *For we brought nothing into the World, neither ſhall we carry any thing out*, 1 Tim. 6. 7.

7. **THOU** haſt parted with thy Wealth; perhaps for thine Advantage: How many have been ſwell'd with Plenty, reſembling the *Oſtrich* or *Buſtard* with the Bulk of Body, unweldly to raiſe their Thoughts to Spiritual Things; who when their Weight have been taken off, have mounted nimbly towards Heaven? How many had loſt their Lives, if (with the Philoſopher) they had not parted with their Gold? and, how many through Covetouſneſs, may loſe their Souls? The Veſſel had ſunk in this boiſt'rous Sea, if the Earthly Freight had not been caſt over-board? and why art thou troubled

to

to lose that, which might have undone thee in keeping?

8. THOU had'st Wealth: Hast thou not parted with that, for which many hath been worse both in Body and Soul; and for which never any Soul was better? Have not Corn-fields been spoil'd with Rankness, and a Branch spilt with too much Fruit? Whereas had they been thinner sown, or seasonably eaten down, had yielded a fair Crop; and those Boughs moderately laden, had out-liv'd many *Autumns*. Do'st thou not hear thy *Saviour* say, *How hardly shall they that have Riches enter into the Kingdom of God?* Mat. 10. 23. Art thou troubled that a Stumbling block is remov'd out of thy way to Happiness? That the Bunch of the *Camel* is taken off, if yet thou wilt pass through the Eye of the Needle?

9. THOU had'st Riches? But had'st thou not Cares attended 'em? Else thou hast fared better than thy Neighbours. None but thy self could handle these Roses without pricking their Fingers. He was famous amongst the *Jewish* Doctors, whose Maxim was; *He that multiplies Riches, multiplies Cares*: And our *Saviour* hath annexed, *The Cares of the World, and the Deceitfulness of Riches*, Mark 4. 19. He was envied at *Rome*, which could experimently say, The poor Man laughs oftner and freer than the Rich; and that external Felicity is a perplexity, never ceasing to vex it self. Thy sides are now freed from Thorns, why do'st thou repine at thine Ease?

10. THOU lately possess'd'st great Riches: But rather say, Thou wert possess'd by them? A wise *Roman* truly observed, That many a one hath Wealth, which clogs him, as many aptly say, Such a one has an Ague, when indeed the Ague hath him, and holds him with severity. Indeed, many a Man's Wealth is his Master, and keeps under rigid Articles, not allowing sufficient Diet, Competent Rest,

nor

nor any Recreation: If thou wert thus a Slave to thine Eſtate, thou art not thine own Man; enjoy thy Liberty, and with thy *Patience*, be thankful.

THOU art very poor: Who made thee ſo? If thy Negligence, Lazineſs, Improvidence, Prodigality and raſh Engagements; thou haſt reaſon to bear that Burthen, which thou haſt pull'd upon thy Shoulders: And if forc'd to groan under thy Load, which thy own Will hath procured in this Neceſſity; let the ſame Neceſſity move thy Will to run as lightly as thou canſt with that preſſing Weight: If the Occaſion comes by others, *God* will enable thee cheerfully to flie with this Croſs, becauſe thy Hand was not Guilty of impoſing it.

12. HOW eaſie is it for thee to ſee *God*'s Hand chaſtiſing thee by another Man's Sin? And to be griev'd at the Sin of others Injuriouſneſs, than at thine own Correction. How diſmal it is for Chriſtians to ſee Brethren a Prey to each other? That Neighbours ſhould be like the *Reed* and *Brake*, ſet near together, the one to Starve the other? That we ſhould have daily occaſion to renew that woful Compariſon of *Bromiard*, betwixt the Friends and Enemies of *Chriſt*; *That Jews don't ſuffer Beggars, but Chriſtians make them?*

13. NOW, if *God* thinks fit to ſend Poverty to thy Door, by the Meſſage of Men, bid it Welcom for his ſake that ſent it, and entertain it, not repiningly, for its own ſake; for if well us'd, 'twill repay thee with many Bleſſings, as quiet Reſt, ſafe Security, humble Patience, contented Humility, and a contemptuous Valuation of Earthly Things! All which abſented thy Houſe in a Proſperous Condition.

14. THOU art depriv'd of thy former Conveniencies, as Diet, Lodging, and Attendance. How many have affected that which is befallen

fallen thee upon Neceſſity? Some out of the Grounds of *Philoſophy*, others of *Religion*. *Attalus* the Philoſopher, might have lain Soft; yet he Praiſes the Bed and Pillow that will not yield to his Body: And *Nero*'s great and rich Maſter, brags of his uſual dining without a Table. What ſhould I tell then of the *Phariſees* uneaſie Couches and penal Garments; the Mats of the Elect *Manichees*, and the auſtere Uſages of the antient *Eremitical* Chriſtians, their rigorous Abſtinences, affamiſhing Meals, nightly Watchings, cold Ground-lyings, and ſharp Diſciplines? Thou art in Eaſe and Splendor, in compariſon of theſe, who voluntarily impos'd upon 'em theſe Severities, which thou wouldſt be loath to undergo from others Cruelty. It was a ſtrange word of *Epicurus*, not ſavouring of Contentment, but Preſumption; *Give me but Water with Barley-Meal, and I ſhall vie with* Jupiter *for Happineſs*. And if this *Ethnick*, who had an ill Name for Affectation of Pleaſure, could reſt ſo well contented with a poor Meſs of this Compoſition, what a ſhame it is for Chriſtians not to think themſelves ſatisfied with a larger (tho homely Proviſion?

A Prayer in time of Poverty.

O MOST Great and Glorious Lord God, the Earth is thine, and thy Providence divideth it among the Sons of Men; thou makeſt Poor, and thou makeſt Rich; thou bringeſt low, and lifteſt up the Needy out of the Duſt, that he may Glorifie thee: Thou art the Saviour and Deliverer of the Fatherleſs, and him that hath no helper: Lord, behold my Neceſſities, who deſpiſeſt not the Needy; tho thou haſt Afflicted me, yet Strengthen me ſo, that my Wants may never caſt me down to deſpair of thy Favour, nor endeavour their ſupply by any thing

thing which offendeth thee; and whatever I want, let me never want the comfortable assurance of thy Love and Mercy, neither take thy holy Spirit from me.

2. *BE my Strength in Distress, a Refuge from the Storm, and a Shadow from the Heat. O thou who art the God of all Consolation, supply I beseech thee, my Necessities, hear me, and make speed to relieve me; forsake me not, O my God; open the high Places, and the Fountains in the midst of the Valleys for the Thirsty Soul: Let thy hand relieve me, until thou shalt be pleased to bring me into thy blessed Presence, where is fulness of Joy, without want, measure, or end: Lord, sanctifie those Wants unto me, make me rich in Faith, and those Spiritual Treasures, which once had, shall never be lost again. Grant me these things O merciful God, and whatever else thou knowest necessary for me, for the sake of thy dear Son, my ever Blessed Lord and Saviour.* Amen.

SECT. X.

Of Confinement.

1. THOU art restrain'd of thy Liberty: I cannot blame thee to be sensible of the Affliction. Liberty uses to hold competition with Life it self: And how many have lost their Lives to purchase Liberty? But take care that thou art not guilty of thine own Complaint, for certainly thou canst not be depriv'd of Liberty, except thou wilt: Liberty is a priviledge of the Will: Will is a Sovereign Power, not subject to Restraint, or Constraint.

2. HAST

2. HAST thou freedom to thine own Thoughts? It is not the Incloſing of theſe external Parts that can make thee a Priſoner: Thou art not worthy the name of a Man, if thou imagin'ſt this Body thy ſelf, which Human Power can reach to. Art thou a Chriſtian? Then thou haſt learn'd to ſubmit thy Will to *God's*; and his Divine Will is declared in his Actions: And if his will be to have thee Reſtrain'd, why ſhould it not be thine? And if thou deſire to be Confin'd, why doſt thou complain for want of Liberty?

3. THOU art Reſtrain'd: And is it ſuch Injuſtice thou art depriv'd from ranging Abroad? How ill haſt thou improv'd thy Time, if thou haſt not laid up enough both of Employment and Contentment in thy Boſom? What pleaſure can'ſt thou enjoy abroad to behold thoſe Contentions and horrid Actions thine Eye ſhall meet withal; which thy Confinement frees thee from being a Spectator. The Thought is enough to make a Man Miſerable: And inſtead of them, thou art preſented only with the Face of thy Keeper, which Cuſtom and Neceſſity hath made Familiar.

4. THOU art immur'd within Stone-Walls, and all Company ſecluded from thee; but content thy ſelf: *God* and his Angels cannot be kept out: Thou haſt better Company in Solitude, than Liberty afforded thee: The Jollity of Freedom rob'd thee of the Converſation of Spiritual Comforts, which only can render thee Happy: They which were Strangers to thee, are thy Gueſts and Inmates, to Sojourn with thee in this Retiredneſs. What if the Light be excluded from thee? It cannot hinder thee from ſeeing the Inviſible. *The Darkneſs hideth not from thee* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *but the Night ſhineth as the Day; the Darkneſs and the Light are both alike to thee*, Pſal. 139. 12.

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5. I may ſay without dubiouſneſs, God hath never been ſo evidently ſeen, as in darkeſt Dungeons; for the external Light of Proſperity directs our Viſive Beams, which are ſtrongly contracted in a deep Obſcurity: He muſt deſcend low and be in Darkneſs, that would ſee the glorious Lights of Heaven by day. They ever ſhine, but not ſeen except in the Night: If thine Eyes be bleſſed with this inviſible Proſpect, thou art exempt from envying thoſe Perſons, tho they could ſee all that the Tempter repreſented to the view of our Saviour upon the higheſt Mountain; *All the Kingdoms of the World and the Glory of them.*

6. THOU art forced to Retiredneſs, but with what Diſpoſition of Mind and Body? If thou hadſt a burden'd Soul, the open and free Air could not refreſh thee; and if thou have a ſincere Heart, a ſtrict Cloſeneſs cannot diſmay thee; thy Thoughts can keep thee Company, and cheer thy Solitarineſs. If thou hadſt an unſound Body, afflicted with the Gout, Rupture, or Luxation of ſome Limb, thou wouldſt not complain of thy Retiredneſs; thy Pain would make thee inſenſible of thy Confinement: But if *God* have bleſſed thee with Health, how eaſily may'ſt thou digeſt an harmleſs Limitation.

7. A Wiſe Man (as *Laurentius* obſerv'd) doth much in Solitude: So may'ſt thou employ the Hours of thy cloſe Retiredneſs, and bleſs God for ſo happy an Opportunity. How memorable an Inſtance hath our Age afforded us, of an Eminent Perſon, to whoſe Learning we are all oblig'd for that noble *Hiſtory of the World.* The Court had his Youthful Years, and the Tower his latter Age: The Tower Reform'd the Court in him, and produc'd theſe worthy Monuments of Art and Induſtry, Sir *Walter Rawleigh.*

ſtry, which we ſhould in vain expected from his Freedom and Jollitry. It is obſerv'd, that ſhining Wood, within doors loſeth its Light: It is otherwiſe with this, and many active Wits, which had never ſhin'd if not for Confinement.

8. THOU art cloſe ſhut up: *Anchorets* have ſued for this as a Favour, which thou eſteemeſt a Puniſhment; and having obtain'd it, have plac'd Merit in that thou apprehend'ſt Miſery. Our *Hiſtory* relates of one, who when the Church, Where his Cell was annex'd, was on Fire, would not come out, but Die, and lye Buried under the Aſhes of that Roof where his Vow had fix'd him.

9. THOU art Impriſon'd: Wiſe Men are apt in all Events, to enquire into the Cauſes: Wherefore doſt thou ſuffer? Is it for thy Guiltineſs? Make thy Goal God's Correction-Houſe, for the reforming of thy Wickedneſs. Remember and imitate *Manaſſes*, the evil Son of a good Father; who upon Humiliation by his juſt Impriſonment, found an happy Expiation of his horrible Idolatries, Muders and Witchcrafts; whoſe Bonds brought him home to God, and himſelf. Is it for Debt? Think not to pay thy Creditors with a lingring Durance, if power be in thine hands for a Diſcharge. If there is Fraud and Injuſtice in this Confinement: Fear thou a worſe Priſon, if thou wilt wilfully live and die Indebted when thou mayſt be Free and Honeſt.

10. STRETCH thine ability to the utmoſt, to ſatisfie others, tho thou art Impoveriſh'd: But if the hand of God have diſabled thee, labour what thou canſt to agree with thy Creditors: If they are Cruel, look up with *Patience* to the Almighty, who thinks fit to afflict thee with their Unreaſonableneſs; and make the ſame good uſe of thy Sufferings, as if from the immediate Hand of thy Creator.

tor. If it be for a good Cauſe, rejoyce in this Tribulation, and be exhilerated with the Bleſſed Apoſtles, that thou art *Counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame and bonds for the Name of the Lord Jeſus*, Acts 5. 41. For every juſt Cauſe he owns: Neither is he leſs a Martyr, that ſuffers for his Conſcience in any of *God*'s Commandments, than he who ſuffers for matter of Faith and Religion.

11. REMEMBER that Cordial Word of thy *Saviour: Bleſſed are they that are perſecuted for Righteouſneſs ſake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven*, Mat. 5. 10. In ſuch a Priſon thou ſhalt be ſure to find good Company; as *Joſeph*, *Micaiah*, *Jeremiah*, *John Baptiſt*, *Peter*, *Paul* and *Silas*; and all the Holy Martyrs and Confeſſors of *Chriſt*, from the firſt Plantation of the Goſpel to this preſent. Repent, if thou canſt, to be thus accompanied; and chooſe not rather to violate a good Conſcience for freedom, than to be kept under a Momentary Reſtraint.

12. THOU art a Priſoner: Make the beſt of thy Condition: cloſe Air is warmer than open; and how frequently do we hear *Birds* ſing ſweeter Notes in Cages than in Woods? It is thy defect, if thou art not amended by thy Retir'dneſs. Thou art a Priſoner: So is thy Soul in thy Body; there not reſtrain'd only, but fetter'd; yet complains not of the ſtraitneſs of theſe Clay-Walls, or weight of theſe Bonds; but *patiently* waits for a happy Goal-delivery: So do thou attend with all Long-ſuffering the good hour of the Pleaſure of *God*: Thy period is ſet, not without regard to thy Advantage: He, in whoſe hand are all Times, hath determined a fit time to free thy Body from theſe Priſon-Walls, and thy Soul from this Priſon of thy Body: and to reſtore Body and Soul *from the Bondage of Corruption, to the Glorious Liberty of the Sons of* God, Rom. 8. 21.

A Prayer in Confinement:

O Holy, Lord God, who wouldeſt not the death of a Sinner, but rather that he ſhould turn from his Wickedneſs and live: Lord, Convert my Soul, remove my Sins, and frame my Heart, Affections and Life, according to thy bleſſed Will: Thou who heareſt the Poor, and deſpiſeſt not the Wretched Captive, viſit all that are bound: Lord, hear them in an acceptable time, and help them in the day of Salvation: Preſerve the Oppreſſed and Deſpiſed of Men: Say unto the Priſoners, go forth, and to them that are in Darkneſs ſhew your Selves: Bind up the Broken Hearted, proclaim Liberty to the Captives, and open the Priſon to them that are ſhut up: Comfort them that Mourn, let their deep Sighing come before thee: And according to the greatneſs of thy Power, preſerve thou them that are appointed to dye.

2. *LORD, lift thou up my head, enlarge my feet, and bring me out of all bondage, that I may live to ſerve and praiſe thee, in the Aſſembly of thy Servants: However thou pleaſeſt to diſpoſe of me, Let all my Sufferings redound to thy Glory, and my own Salvation: Give me Patience to endure, and a conſtancy to depend on thee, a firm Faith to apprehend thy Promiſes, and a hope to expect thy Saving Health: Conſider my Weakneſs, and lay no more upon me, then thou wilt Enable me to bear cheerfully: Sanctifie my Afflictions, and make them good to me in the Fruits of Righteouſneſs, which thou haſt laid up for all thoſe who reſt on thee. Hear me, O Lord, and let my Cry come unto thee, and have Mercy upon me.* Amen.

SECT.

SECT. XI.

In Exile.

1. THOU art baniſh't thy Country: Beware leſt in Complaining, thou cenſure thy ſelf. A wiſe Man's Country is every where. What relation hath the Place of thy Nativity, to thy preſent Station; any more than the Time of thy Reſiding? What Reaſon haſt thou to be more affected to the *Region* where thou dreweſt thy firſt Breath, than to the day of Week, or the Hour of the Day in which thou ſaluteſt the Light? What are Times and Places of our Birth, but unconcerning Circumſtances? Where-ever thou enjoy'ſt thy ſelf, thou mayſt make that thy Country.

2. BUT thou ſay'ſt; There is a ſecret Property in our Native Soyl, that attracts our Affection, and weds our Hearts to it, not without a pleaſing kind of Delight; now no Reaſon can be granted, why we affect the Place, it is not becauſe better than others, but being our own we eſteem it: *Ulyſſes* doth no leſs value the Rocky Soyl of his barren *Ithaca*, than *Agamemnon* the noble Walls of his rich and pleaſant *Mycenæ*. I grant this Relation hath ſo powerful an Influence upon our hearts naturally, as is pretended; yet ſuch a one as is eaſily check'd with a ſmall unkindneſs: How many upon an actual Affront have diverted their Reſpects from their Native Country, and out of a ſtrong Alenation of Mind have turn'd their Love into Hoſtility.

3. WE ſhall not ſeek far for Hiſtories, our Times and Memories will furniſh us ſufficiently: Some who have ſucked the Breaſts of our common Mother, upon a little diſlike, have ſpit in her Face? Others of our Domeſtick Compatriots, have upon the diſguſt of ſome diſpleaſing Laws fled their Country, ſuborn'd Treaſons, and incited Forreign Princes to our Invaſion? That have endeavour'd to ſubvert

the Government, extirpate that Religion Eſtabliſh't amongſt us; and to ſet up a piece of Pageantry of their own? So this Natural Affection is not ſo ardent in many, but may be quench'd with a mean Diſcontentment. If there were no other ground of thine Affliction, thy Sorrow is not ſo deep-rooted, but it may eaſily be pluck'd up.

4. PERHAPS it is not the Air or Earth, thou inſiſts upon; but the Company, from whom it is Death to part: Thou argueſt, I ſhall leave all Acquaintance and Converſation; and be caſt upon ſtrange Faces, and Languages I underſtand not: My beſt Entertainment will be Solitude, and my Ordinary, Inhoſpitality. What do'ſt thou perplex thy ſelf with theſe ſuperfluous Terrors? He is not worthy the Name of a *Philoſopher*, much leſs of a Chriſtian, that hath not attain'd to be abſolute in himſelf; and which way ſoever he is caſt, to ſtand upon his own Bottom; that if there were no other Men left in the World, was ignorant how to enjoy himſelf: It is that within us, whereby we muſt live and be happy: Some Additions of Complacency may come from without: Sociable Natures find Pleaſure in Converſation; but if that be deny'd, Sanctify'd Spirits know how to converſe comfortably with *God* and themſelves.

5. HOW many holy Ones of old have purpoſely withdrawn themſelves from Worldly Company, that they might be bleſſed with an inviſible Society; that have exchanged Cities for Deſerts, Houſes for Caves, the Sight of Men for Beaſts; that their Spiritual Eyes might be fixed upon thoſe Objects, which the World held from them? And neceſſity puts thee into that Eſtate, which their Piety affected. But to be driven to forſake Parents, Kinſfolk, Friends; how ſad a Caſe muſt it needs be? What is this, but a perfect Diſtraction? What are we,

but

but Off-ſprings of our Parents? What are Friends, but dear to us? And what is the World without theſe Comforts?

6. WHEN thou haſt ſaid all; what is befal'n thee more, than it pleaſed *God* to enjoyn the Father of the Faithful? *Get thee out of thy Country, and from thy Kindred, and from thy Fathers Houſe, into a Land that I will ſhew thee*, Gen. 12. 1. The ſame *God*, by the Command of Authority, calls thee to this Separation: If thou wilt ſhew thy ſelf worthy the Son of ſuch a Father, do that in an humble Obedience to *God*, which thou art urg'd to do by Compulſion of Men.

7. BUT is this ſo vexatious a Caſe? Do'ſt thou think to find *God* where thou goeſt? Or doſt thou believe his Company will attend thee to the End of thy Journey? Hath he not ſaid, who cannot fail; *I will not leave thee, nor forſake thee?* Certainly, he is not worthy to lay Claim to *God*, that cannot find Parents, Kindred and Friends in him alone: Beſides, he that of *Stones could raiſe up Children unto Abraham*; how eaſily can he of Inhoſpitable Men, raiſe up Friends to the Sons of *Abraham?* Only labour to inherit that Faith wherein he walked; that alone ſhall free-*Denizen* thee in the beſt of Foreign States, and ſhall entertain thee in the wildeſt Deſarts.

8. THOU art caſt upon a Foreign Nation: Be of good Chear: *Flowers* remov'd grow greater; and ſome *Plants*, which were unthriving and unwholſom in their own Soil, have grown ſafe and flouriſhing in other Climates. Had *Joſeph* been great, if not tranſplanted into *Egypt?* Had *Daniel*, and his three Companions of the Captivity ever attained honour in their Native Land? Many have found that health, in a Change of Air, which they could not meet at home? In *Africa*, the South-Wind clears up; and the North is Rainy. Look ſtill to

that hand, which tranſlated thee; wait his good Pleaſure: Be thou no Stranger to *God*; it matters not who are Strangers to thee.

9. **THOU** art baniſh't: How canſt thou be ſo, when upon thy Fathers Ground? *The Earth is the Lords, and the fulneſs thereof; the World, and they that dwel therein*, Pſal. 24. 1 In his Right, where-ever thou art, thou may'ſt challenge a Spiritual Intereſt: *All things*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *are yours; and you are Chriſt's, and Chriſt is God's*, 1 Cor. 3. 21, 22, 23. No Man can challenge thee for a Stranger, that is not thy Father's Child.

9. **THINE** Exile ſeparates thee from Friends: This were no ſmall Affliction, if it might not be remedied. That was a true Word of *Laurentius*, That where Two Faithful Friends are met, *God* makes up a Third: But is it no leſs true, that where one Faithful Spirit is, *God* makes up a Second: One *God* can more than ſupply a thouſand Friends.

11. **THY** Baniſhment deprives thee of the Comfort of thy Companions: Would not a voluntary Travel do as much? Do not thouſands, willingly for many Years, change their Country for Foreign Regions; taking long Farewels of their deareſt Friends and Acquaintance; ſome out of Curioſity, and a thirſt after knowledge, and ſome out of a covetous deſire after a Gain? What Difference is there betwixt thee and them, but that their Travel is voluntary, thy Exile conſtrain'd? But who are there thou art ſo ſorry to part with? Remember what *Crates* the Philoſopher ſaid to a Young Man, that was beſet with Paraſitical Friends: Young Man, ſaid he, I pity thy Solitude: Perhaps, thou may'ſt be more alone in ſuch Society, than in the Wilderneſs: Such Converſation is better loſt, than continued. If thou canſt but be well acquainted with thy ſelf, thou ſhalt be ſorry thou wert no ſooner ſolitary.

12.

12. THOU art from thy Country: Who is not ſo? We are all *Pilgrims* together with thee, 1 *Pet.* 2. 11. *Heb.* 11. 13. *Whilſt we are at home in the Body, we are abſent from the Lord,* 2 Cor. 5. 6. Miſerable are we, if our true home be not Above: That is the *Better Country* which we ſeek, even *an Heavenly, Heb.* 11. 16. And thither thou mayſt equally direct thy Courſe in whatſoever *Region.* This Center of Earth is equidiſtant from the Glorious Circumference of Heaven: If we may once meet there, what need we make ſuch Difference in the way?

A Prayer in Exile.

O *LORD GOD, Lord of the Mountains and Vallies, Land and Sea, and the God of the Exiled, and Out-caſt; thou doſt with much Patience behold Oppreſſion and Wrong, until the meaſures of Iniquity be filled up: O Lord, behold the preſſures of me thy poor, diſpiſed, and dejected Servant: Thy Mercy and Gracious Audience of the Afflicted is neither limited to* Jeruſalem, *nor this Mountain, every place is equally near Heaven, and where ever Men lift up pure Hands and Hearts, Worſhipping of thee in Spirit and Truth, thou art there preſent to hear, and help them: Lord, thou ſeeſt good to permit me to the power of Men to Exerciſe me, yet can they not ſhut thy Merciful Ear againſt me: O let my Complaint therefore come before thee: Let thy word be as the Cloudy-Pillar to lead me in thy Way, and let thy good Spirit direct me.*

2. *LORD, leave me not deſtitute and comfortleſs in my Afflictions: Be my Guide and Helper in this Earthly Pilgrimage, and Valley of Tears, unto, and in the Hour which thou haſt appointed to take me hence, into the incorruptible, and undefiled Inheritance, which thou by thy Power haſt reſerved in Heaven for all Believers: There no hand of the Oppreſſor can reach, and where ſhall be no Curſe, no Sin, nor fear of Forfeiture: Into which no*

Enemy ſhall be admitted, and from which no Inhabitant ſhall ever be caſt out: Lord Hear and Help me: Lord have Mercy on me, and grant me that which I ask according to thy will, and that which I ſhould ask, which thou knoweſt beſt for me, through the Infinite Merits of of the Son of thy Love; the Author and Finiſher of our Salvation, Chriſt the Righteous. Amen.

SECT. XII.

Of Blindneſs and Deafneſs.

1. THOU haſt loſt thine Eyes; a Loſs which all the World is uncapable to repair; and thou art condemn'd to perpetual Darkneſs: *For, the Light of the Body is the Eye; and if the Light that is in thee be Darkneſs, how great is that Darkneſs?* Mat. 6. 22, 23. Couldſt thou have foreſeen this Evil, thou hadſt anticipated this Loſs, by weeping out thoſe Eyes for Grief, which now thou art deſtitute of. There are but two Senſes, by which any external Comfort can have free acceſs to thy Soul; *Seeing* and *Hearing*. One of 'em is now extinguiſh'd for ever. Yet thou haſt two internal Eyes, that can ſupply the want of thy external; the Eye of Reaſon and the Eye of Faith: The One as a Man, the Other as a Chriſtian. Anſwerable to which there is a double Light apprehended by 'em; Rational and Divine.

2. SOLOMON tells thee of the one; *Prov.* 20, 27. *The Spirit of a Man is the Candle of the Lord, ſearching all the Inward Parts of the Belly.* St. *John* tells thee of the other; 1 John 1. 5, 7. *God is Light, and in Him is no Darkneſs; and we walk in the Light, as he is in the Light.* Now the two Lights ſo far exceed

that

that external and visible, of which thou art deprived, as Light Darkness: If then by the Eye of Reason thou attainst to intelligible Things; and by the Eye of Faith, to things Supernatural and Divine; the Improvement of these Eyes, will make amends for the want of thy Natural ones.

3. THY Sight is lost: Let me tell thee what *Antony* the *Hermite* (whom *Ruffinus* is not doubious of stiling Blessed) said to Learned *Didymus* of *Alexandria*, that was Blind; *Let it not trouble thee*, O Didymus, *that thou art bereft of thy Carnal Eyes; for thou lackest only those Eyes, which Mice and Flyes, and Lyzards have: But rejoice that thou hast those Eyes, which the Angels have, whereby they see* God, *and by which thou art enlightned with a great measure of Knowledge.* Endeavour to perfect this, and thou shalt not be much discomforted with the absence of them.

4. THINE Eyes are lost, and the chief Comfort of thy Life gone with them: *The Light is sweet*, saith *Solomon*; *and a pleasant thing it is for the Eyes to behold the Sun*, Eccles. 11. 7. Hath not God done this purposely, that he might take thee off from all Earthly Objects, that thou might'st fix thy self upon him, and seek those Spiritual Comforts which are to be found in a better Light? The Sun is the most glorious Planet the Eyes can possibly see; but thy Spiritual ones may behold him that Created that glorious Luminary, who is infinitely more glorious than what he Created. If thou hast now an Inspection into him more than thou hadst, that which thou countedst thy Loss, hath prov'd thy Gain.

5. THOU art Blind? and certainly it is a sore Affliction. The Men of *Jabesh Gilead* offered the Tyrant of the *Ammonites* to serve him, 1 Sam. 11. 1. But when he required the loss of their *Right*

Eyes, as a Condition of Peace, they will rather hazard their Lives in an unequal War; as if Servitude and Death were a leſs Miſchief than one Eye's loſs: How much more of Both? For tho one Eye be but *Teſtis Singularis*, yet the evidence of that is as true as of both, and in ſome Cauſes more: For when ye take a perfect Aim, we ſhut one Eye, as being conducive to an accurate Perſpective: Yet for ordinary uſe, we value equally theſe Lights, that there is no wiſe Man, but would rather loſe a Limb, than one of them.

6. A Perſon not leſs Religious than Witty, when his Friends bewail'd the loſs of one of his Eyes, ask'd them, whether they wept for the Eye which he had loſt, or the Eye which remain'd? Weep rather ſaid he, for the Enemy that ſtays behind, than for the Enemy that's gone. He look'd upon his Sight with Eyes different from others; he look'd upon 'em as Enemies, which others beheld as Officious Servants, good Friends, and dear Favourites.

7. INDEED, they are all of theſe, as they are us'd: Good Servants, if they go faithfully on their Errands, and return true Intelligence: Good Friends, if they adviſe and invite us to Holy Thoughts: But Enemies, if they ſuggeſt Evil. If thine Eyes have been employ'd in evil Offices to thy Soul; God hath done that for thee which he hath in a Figurative Senſe, enjoyn'd thee to do thy ſelf: Matt. 5. 29. *If thy Right Eye offend thee, pluck it out, and caſt it from thee: For it is better for thee that one of thy Members ſhould Periſh, and not that thy whole Body ſhould be caſt into Hell.*

8. THOU haſt loſt thine Eyes, and with 'em Earthly Contentment: But thou art hereby freed of many Temptations; for thoſe were the Inlets of Sin; and the very Panders of Luſt, for Debauching of the Soul. How many thouſands on their Death-

Death-beds, upon the ſad recalling of their guilty Thoughts, have wiſh'd they had been Born Blind? So as thy Joy is leſs, thy Sin is leſs; neither ſhall any vain Objects take away thy Thoughts from the ſerious Meditation of Spiritual things.

9. BEFORE it was no otherwiſe with thee, than the Prophet *Jeremiah* reports of the *Jews*; *That Death is come up by the Windows*, Jer. 9. 21. And our great Grand-mother *Eve*; *She ſaw the Tree was pleaſant to the Eyes, and took of the Fruit*, Gen. 3. 6. And it hath been ſo ever ſince, with the Fruit of her Womb, both in the old and latter World: *The Sons of God ſaw the Daughters of Men that they were Fair, and they took them Wives of all which they choſe*, Gen. 6. 2. Inſomuch as not filthy Luſts, but Adulteries take up their Lodgings: The bleſſed Apoſtle mentions it, 2 *Pet.* 2 14. *Having Eyes* (ſaith he) *full of Adultry, and cannot ceaſe from Sin.* Whilſt thine *Heart walked after thine Eyes*, as *Job* ſpeaks, *Job* 31. 7. It could do no leſs, but *Carry thee down to the Chambers of Death*, Prov. 2. 27. Thou art now deliver'd from that danger of ſo deadly a Miſguidance.

10. HATH not the loſs of thine Eyes freed thee of a World of Sorrows? Hadſt thou but ſeen what others are forc'd to behold, thoſe fearful Conflagrations, ſavage Violences, and Sacrilegious Outrages, thine Heart would bleed within thee: Now thou art affected at a diſtance, receiving 'em by the imperfect Intelligence of thine Ear from the unfeeling Relation of others.

11. THINE Eyes are loſt; What need thy Heart to go with 'em? Old *Iſaac* was Dark-ſighted when he gave the Bleſſing (contrary to his own Intentions) to his Son *Jacob*; yet he liv'd forty Years after, and could be pleaſed to have good Proviſion made him with *Wine and Veniſon*, Gen. 27. 25. Our

Life

Life doth not lye in our Eyes: *The Spirit of a Man is that which upholds his Infirmities*, Prov. 18. 14. Labour to raiſe thy ſelf to a cheerful Diſpoſition; and in thy Bodily Darkneſs, *There ſhall be Light and Joy to thy Soul*, Eſt. 8. 16.

12. HATH God taken away thy Sight? But hath he not given thee a ſupply in other Faculties? Are not thy internal Senſes more quick, thy Memory ſtronger, thy Fancy more active, and thy Underſtanding more apprehenſive? The Wonders we have heard of Blind Men's Memories, were it to be credited, not obvious to conceive, that the removal of Diſtractions, gives them opportunity of a careful repoſition of deſired Objects, and a ſure Fixedneſs of 'em where they are laid. Hence hath it come to paſs, that ſome Blind Men have attain'd to thoſe Perfections which their Eyes could never have endu'd 'em with.

13. OUR Eccleſiaſtical Story reports of *Didymus* of *Alexandria*, being Blind from his Infancy, through his Prayers and diligent Endeavours, reach'd unto ſuch knowledge in *Logick*, *Arithmetick* and *Aſtronomy*, as was admir'd by the Learn'd Maſters of thoſe Arts; and for his rare inſight in *Divinity*, was by St. *Athanaſius* approv'd to be Doctor of the Chair in that Church. What need we doubt the Verity of it, when our late Times have ſo clearly ſeconded it? having yielded divers worthy *Divines*, which have been depriv'd of Sight.

Mr. Fiſher *of Trinity Colledge*

14. THERE was one very Eminent in the Univerſity of *Cambridge*, of great skill in Tongues and Arts, and of ſingular acuteneſs of Judgment. *Suidas* reports of *Neoclides*, that beirg Blind, he could ſteal more cunningly than any that had uſe of Eyes: I may as boldly ſay of Mr. *Fiſher*, That he was more dextrous in picking the Locks

of

of difficult Authors, and extracting their Treaſures of hidden Secrets, than thoſe that had the ſharpeſt Eyes about 'em; inſomuch as it was noted, thoſe were ſingular Proficients which employ'd themſelves in reading to him: If they read Books to him, he dictates Lectures the while to them, and taught 'em more than he learn'd himſelf.

15. AS for the other external Senſes, they are vulgarly more exquiſite in the Blind: We read of ſome who have been of ſo accurate a Touch, that by their feeling they could diſtinguiſh betwixt Black and White: And for the Ear, as our Philoſophers obſerve, Sounds are ſweeter to the Blind than to the Sighted, being more curiouſly judg'd by 'em: But the moſt perfect recompence of theſe Natural Eyes, is in the Exaltation of our Spiritual Ones. We are more Illuminated towards the Beautifical Viſion of God, as they apprehend more Obſcurity in all Terreſtial Objects: Thou wilt not miſs the loſs of thy Sight, if thou findſt thy Soul thus happily Illuminated. *Lord* Bacon's *Natural Hiſtory.*

16. THINE Eyes are loſt: It is a Bleſſing that once thou hadſt 'em: Hadſt thou been Born Blind, what a Stranger wouldſt thou have been to God and the World? Hadſt thou never ſeen the Face of the Elements, what Expreſſions could have made thee apprehenſive of the wonderful Works of thy Creator? Not any Diſcourſe could have made thee underſtand what Light is? The Sun the Fountain of it, the Heavens the Glorious Region of it, and the Moon and Stars Illuminated by it? How could'ſt thou have had thy Thoughts raiſed ſo high, as to give Glory to that Great God, whoſe infinite Power hath wrought all theſe marvellous things.

17. NO

17. NO doubt, God hath his ways of Mercy for thoſe that are Born Blind; not requiring what he hath not given, ſupplying by his Spirit in the internal Veſſels, what is wanting in the External: So as even thoſe that never ſee the Face of the World, ſhall behold the Face of God that made it: But in an ordinary Courſe of proceeding, thoſe which have been Blind from their Birth, muſt needs want thoſe helps of knowing and glorifying God in his mighty Works, which lye open to Sight: Theſe once ſatisfied thine Eyes, and remain with thee in their abſence.

18. THEREFORE walk on in the ſtrength of thoſe fixed thoughts; alwayes adoring the Majeſty of that God whom thy Sight hath repreſented to thee ſo Glorious; and in an humble Submiſſion to his Pleaſure, ſtrive againſt all the diſcomforts of thy Sufferings. It is reported of a valiant Soldier, *Polyzelus*, who after his Eyes were ſhot out in Battle, covering his Face with his Target, fought and laid about him vehemently, as if he had receiv'd no hurt. Strive to imitate this Courage, and let not the loſs of thine Eyes hinder thee from a cheerful Reſiſtance of thoſe Spiritural Enemies, which labour to draw thee into an impatient Murmuring againſt God: But wait humbly upon him who hath better Eyes for thee than thou haſt loſt.

19. THOU haſt loſt thy Hearing: It is not eaſily determin'd which loſs is greateſt, the Eye, or Ear; both are afflictive. Now all the World is to thee Dumb, ſince thou art Deaf to it: And how ſmall a Matter hath made thee a Cypher amonſt Men? Theſe are the Senſes of Inſtruction; and there is no other way for Intelligence to be convey'd to the Soul, either in Secular or Spiritual Affairs. The Eye is the Window, the Ear is the Door, by which all Knowledge enters: In matter of Obſervation

by

by the Eye; and of Faith, by the Ear, *Rom.* 10.17.

20. HAD it pleas'd God to have excluded theſe Senſes from thy Birth, thy State had been utterly Diſconſolate, and there had been no poſſible acceſs for Comfort to thy Soul. Had this Affliction happen'd in thy riper Age, there had been no way but to be content with thy former Store: But now he hath vouchſafed to leave thee one Paſſage open, it behoves thee to ſupply one Senſe by the other, and to let in thoſe helps by the Window, which are deny'd Entrance at the Door. But now Omnipotency hath been pleas'd to lend thee an Ear ſo long, till thou haſt laid the ſure Foundation of Frith in thy Heart, thou mayſt work upon 'em in this ſilent Opportunity, with Celeſtial Meditations, and raiſe 'em up to no leſs height than thou could'ſt have done by thy quickeſt Hearing.

21. IT is a great Bleſſing, that in the plentitude of thy Senſes, thou wert ſollicitous to improve thy Boſom, as a Magazine of Heavenly Thoughts, providing with the Wiſe *Patriarch*, for the ſeven Years of Dearth: Now that the Paſſages are block'd up, thou mighteſt have been in danger of Famiſhing. Thou haſt now leiſure to recal and ruminate upon thoſe Counſels, which thy Improvement hath laid up in thy Heart, and to thy happy Advantage, find'ſt the difference betwixt a wiſe Providence, and a careleſs Neglect.

22. THINE external Hearing is loſt: But thou haſt an internal Ear, whereby thou hear'ſt the ſecret motions of God's Spirit, which ſhall never be loſt. How many thouſands whom thou envieſt, are in a worſe Condition? They have an external Ear, whereby they hear the voice of Men; but they want that Spiritual Ear, which perceives the leaſt Whiſperings of the Holy Ghoſt: Ears they have, but not hearing ones; for Faſhion more than Uſe.

Wiſe

Wise *Solomon* makes and observes the Distinction, *Prov.* 20. 12. *The hearing Ear, and the seeing Eye, the Lord hath made even both of them.* And a Greater than *Solomon* can say of his formal Auditors, *Hearing, they hear not*, Matt. 13. 13. If thou have an Ear for God, tho Deaf to Men, How much happier art thou than those Millions of Men, that have an Ear for Men, and are Deaf to God.

23. THOU hast lost thy Hearing; and therewith no small Sorrow: How would it grieve thy Soul to hear those woful Ejaculations, pitiful Complaints, hideous Blasphemies, atheistical Notions, mad Paradoxes, and hellish Heresies, wherewith thine Ear would have been Wounded, had it not been barr'd against their Entrance? It is thy just Grief thou missest hearing of many good Words; and it is thy happiness thou art freed from hearing of many Evil. It is an even Lay betwixt the benefit of hearing Good, and the torment of hearing Evil.

A Prayer Consolatory to the Blind and Deaf.

O MOST Powerful Lord God, who hast in thy good pleasure been pleased to deprive me of Seeing and Hearing; I know O Lord, I have deserved thy wrath in a greater measure, even Death and Hell it self, but I know thou art a God full of Compassion, Long-suffering, and abounding in Goodness and Truth, and shews Mercy unto Thousands. Lord, as thou hast inflicted this on me, even the loss of my Sight; illuminate my Understanding by thy holy Spirit: Thou hast taken away my Sight that I might not behold Vanity. O Enlighten my Mind that I may behold inwardly the wonders of thy Law: Lord, I am poor in Spirit, but let thy blessed Spirit help my Infirmities, that in thy Light I may see Light.

2. *AND*

2. *AND, O thou brsght Morning-Star, guide me in the way of thy Commandments, that at laſt I may ſafely arrive where all Tears and Obſtructions of Sight ſhall be taken away from my Bodily Eyes: And though my outward hearing is fled away, yet let me hear the voice of the Comforter ſpeak peace to my Soul, and quietneſs to my Conſcience, that when ever thou ſhalt be pleaſed to call me hence, I may be ready prepared to reſign my ſelf up into thy hands, as into the hands of a Faithful Creator: In the mean time, Lord, Sanctifie theſe thy Fatherly Viſitations to me, and ever remember, that what thou haſt in thy good Pleaſure inflicted on my Body, may be for the good of my Soul, in the day of the Lord Jeſus.* Amen.

SECT. XIII.

Of Sterility.

1. THOU complaineſt of dry Loyns, and a Barren Womb; as *Abraham* did before thee: *What wilt thou give me, ſeeing I go Childleſs?* Gen. 15. 2. And the Wife of *Iſrael* made the ſame Complaints; *Gen.* 30. 1. *Give me Children, or elſe I die.* So deſirous hath Nature been to propagate, and ſo impatient of a Denial: *Lo, Children and the Fruit of the Womb, are an Heritage, and Gift that cometh from the Lord: Happy is he that hath his Quiver full of ſuch Shafts,* Pſal. 127. 4, 6. It is a Bleſſing, *David* grudg'd to Wicked Ones, *Pſal.* 17. 4. *They have Children at their Deſire.*

2. IT was the Curſe *God* inflicted on the Family of *Abimelech*, in *Cloſing up all the Wombs in his Houſe, for* Sarah's *ſake*, Gen. 20. 17, 18. The Judgment threatned to *Ephraim*, is a *miſcarrying Womb, and dry*

dry Breſts, Hoſ. 9. 14. And *Jeconiah*'s Doom is, *Jer.* 22. 30. *Write this Man, Childleſs.* It is a ſpecial Favour of *God*, *That the Barren hath born ſeven*, 1 Sam. 2. 5. And obſerv'd by the *Pſalmiſt*, as a wonder of *God*'s Mercy, *Pſal.* 113.8.that *He makes the Barren Woman to keep Houſe, and to be a joyful Mother of Children.*

3. IT is pity he was born, that eſteems not Children a Bleſſing. She hath a double Favour from *God*, that is a Joyful Mother of Children: Many, breeds Sorrow, and Death: And there is ſcarce any other Bleſſing, ſeaſon'd with ſo much Acrimony of Miſery and Danger. Do but compare one Pain with another, and conſider the Anxious Cares that attend 'em; and tell me, whether thy bemoan'd Sterility enjoys not more eaſe, and leſs ſorrow?

4. IT is thy Sorrow thou art not Fruitful: Conſider thou art freed from a greater affliction. *In Sorrow ſhalt thou bring forth Children*, Gen. 3. 16. Think on the Shrieks in the Painful Travels of thy Neighbours; wearying Days and Nights in reſtleſs Pangs, and calling for Death in deſpair of Delivery: And after the unprofitable Labours of the Midwives, have made uſe of another Sex; ſo have been deliver'd of Life and Birth together. All theſe Sorrows thou haſt eſcap'd: And many whom thou envieſt, have thought thee happier than themſelves?

5. THOU art afflicted thou art not a Mother: And many a one wiſhes they had been Barren. If Children prove deform'd, unnatural and wicked; what a Corroſive is this to the Parents? *Rebecca* thought it long to be twenty Years Childleſs; her Husband at Sixty, prays for Iſſue, *Gen.* 25. 20, 21. his Devotion carried him to *Moriah* the place where his Life was miraculouſly preſerved from the Knife of his Father, hoping it might, by the like Miracle, be renew'd in his Poſterity.

6. GOD

6. GOD hears him; *Rebecca* Conceives: But when ſhe felt that early Combat of her ſtrugling Twins, ſhe can ſay, *If it be ſo, why am I thus?* Gen. 25. 22. And when ſhe ſaw a Child, *Red all over like a hairy Garment*, Gen. 25. 25. and ſaw his Conditions no leſs rough than his Hide, *Gen.* 27. 41. do we not think ſhe wiſh'd that part of her Burden unborn? Certainly, Children are Bleſſings, or Croſſes. Haſt thou a Child well diſpos'd, well govern'd? *A wiſe Son maketh a glad Father*, Prov. 10. 1. Prov. 19. 13. Haſt thou a Child diſorderly and debauch'd? *A fooliſh Son is the Heavineſs of his Mother, and the Calamity of his Father*, Prov. 10. 1. Chap. 19. 13. Haſt thou a Son ſtubborn, and unnatural? Then *Solomon* tells us; *He that waſteth his Father, and chaſeth away his Mother, is a Son that cauſeth Shame, and bringeth Reproach*, Prov. 19. 26. And if ſuch a Son live and die impenitent, what can anſwer the Diſcomfort of that Parent?

7. THOU haſt no Children: As thou haſt leſs Joy, thou haſt leſs Trouble. It is a continual Care that belongs to theſe Poſſeſſions. *Artimedorus* obſerves, that to dream of Children, imports Cares. As they are our greateſt Cares, many leſſer enſues. For thou haſt many Mouths to feed, and 'tis thy Duty to provide for 'em: For, *If any provide not for his own, eſpecially for thoſe of his own Houſe, he hath denied the Faith, and is worſe than an Infidel*, 1 Tim. 5. 8.

Artimedor *de inſomniis, Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 6.

8. DOES not many *Rivulets* from the main *Channel*, leave the *Stream* ſhallow? So is it with thee; But this Expence is not more neceſſary, than comfortable. A Great Man viſited a Gentleman in the *Country*, and ſeeing his Children placed according to their Age and Stature, ſaid, Theſe make Rich Men Poor: But immediately he receiv'd

this Answer; Nay, my *Lord*, these make a Poor Man Rich: For there is not one of these, I would part with for all your Wealth.

9. INDEED, we receive to distribute, and are but *Farmers* of those we leave behind. If we freely lay out of our Substance before-hand, so much of our Rent is happily clear'd. It is observable none are so Covetous as the Childless: For those who for maintenance of large Families, are inur'd to frequent Disbursements, find such Experience of Divine Providence in Prudent Managing of Affairs, that they lay out with more Cheerfulness, then they receive: So that their Care must be abated, when *God* takes it to himself.

10. AND if not wanting to themselves, Faith gives them Ease, in casting their Burden upon him, who hath more Power and Right to it, since Children are more his, than our own. He that feedeth the *Young Ravens*, *Psal.* 147. 9. can he fail the best of his Creatures? A worthy Divine tells us of a Gentlewoman, coming to the Cottage of a poor Neighbour, furnished with Children, could say; *Here are the Mouths, but where is the Meat?* But not long after was answer'd to that Question; for the poor Woman after the Burial of her last Child, inverted the Question upon her; *Here is the Meat, but where is the Mouths?*

11. SURELY, the Great Governour of the World, will never leave any of his without the Bread of Sufficiency; and who so fit to be his Purveyors, as Parents for their Children? Nature hath taught *Birds*, to pick out the best of Grains for their Young: Nature sends Moister out of the Root, which gives Life to Branches and Blossoms: Sometimes, indeed, it meets with a kind Retaliation; some Stork-like Disposition repairs the loving Offices done by the Parents, in a dutiful Retribution to their Age or Necessity.

12.

12. BUT how frequently proved often the contrary? By an unſatiable Importunity of extracting from the Parents that Maintenance, which is extravagant: Sometimes an undutiful neglect, in not owning the Meanneſs of their Parents, or ſupporting their decay'd Eſtate by due Maintenance. Ingratitude is odious in Man; but in a Child monſtrous.

13. IT is thy Grief thou never hadſt a Child? There is not ſo much Comfort in having of Children, as Sorrow in parting with 'em; eſpecially when their parts, and Diſpoſition have raiſed our Hopes, and doubled our Affections towards 'em: And according to the *French* Proverb; *He that hath not, cannot loſe*; ſo, on the contrary, he that hath, muſt loſe. Our Meeting is not more certain, than our Parting: Either we muſt leave them, and ſo their Grief doubles ours; or they leave us, and ſo our Grief will be no leſs than our Love was extended.

14. IF thou wilt be truly wiſe, ſet thy heart upon that only Good, which is not capable of loſing: Divided Affections abate their Force; and ſince no Objects of Dearneſs, diſtracts thy Love, place it wholly upon that Infinite Goodneſs, which entertains it with Mercy, and rewards it with Bleſſedneſs. If *Elkanah* therefore could ſay to his Barren Wife *Hannah*, 1 Sam. 1. 8. *Why weepeſt thou? and why is thy Heart heavy? Am not I better to thee than ten Sons?* How much more comfortably may'ſt thou hear the *Father of Mercies* ſay to thy Soul, Why is thy Heart heavy? Am not I better to thee than ten Thouſand?

A Prayer of Comfort in Sterility.

O GOD, the Great Creator, and Redeemer of all the World, who dist Command our first Parents to Encrease and Multiply: Yet those Blessings thou thinkest not fit to dispence, where thy Wisdom and Providence knows it not requisite: O LORD, thou hast been pleased to give me dry Breasts, and shut up my Womb, and hast kept me from that great pain and peril of Child-Birth, which many have undergone, which hath put a period to their Lives: O let me Bless and Praise thy Holy Name, that I am at this day a living Monument of thy Mercy: And that thy Servant whom thou hast been pleased to ordain for my Husband, is not yet Summoned by Death from me.

2. LORD, thy Omnipotency knows what is most necessary for me, and the less Incumbrances and Cares I meet with in the World, grant that I may the more attentively serve thee; let me in every State, O Lord, submit to thy Holy Will, and not murmure and repine at what thy good pleasure has allotted me: Comfort me, O Lord, I beseech thee, and increase my Love and Affection towards my Husband, that I may say as Elkanah *did to* Hannah, *that he is more worth to me then ten Sons: But, O Lord, grant, that when thou shalt be pleased to call me out of this dark World into thy marvellous Light, that I may be ready to leave all and follow thee, who art my God, and all things.* Amen.

SECT. XIV.

Want of Repose.

1. THOU are afflicted with that which is incident to distemper'd Bodies, and Minds: How wearisom it is to spend the long Night, tossing in

in a reſtleſs Bed, in chaſe of Sleep, which eagerly purſued, flies farther from us? Couldſt thou forbear the Deſire of it, perhaps it would come unexpected: Now thou Sollicites it, like ſome froward Piece, it is coy and pieviſh, and puniſhes thee for thy Eagerneſs after it.

2. HE that commanded an *Hundred twenty ſeven Provinces*, could not command Reſt; *On that Night his Sleep departed from him*, Eſth. 6. 1. neither could he be forc'd, or intreated to his Bed. And the Great *Babylonian* Monarch, though he poſſeſſed ſome Sleep, yet could not keep it; for *His Sleep brake from him*, Dan. 2. 1. And for *Solomon*, it would not appear within his view; *Neither Night nor Day ſeeth he Sleep with his Eyes*, Eccleſ. 8. 16.

3. SURELY, as there is no Earthly thing more comfortable to Nature, than Bodily reſt, as *Jeremiah* ſaith, *Jer.* 31. 26. *And my Sleep was ſweet unto me*: So there is nothing more grievous and diſheartning: If the Senſes be not ſometimes lock't up, they muſt waſt, if the Body be not refreſhed with a moderate Repoſe? And commonly the Soul follows the Temper of the Body, it cannot but find a Diſcompoſure in her Faculties and Operations.

4. DO we not find Ravings and Frenzies the Attendants of over Watchfulneſs? Therefore thy Tongue hath juſt Cauſe to complain of thy Eyes. For Remedy, inſtead of Cloſing thy Lids for Sleep; lift up thy Eyes to him that *Giveth his Beloved reſt*, Pſal. 127. 2. For he holdeth thine *Eyes waking*, Pſal. 77. 4. He keeps Sleep from thy Body, for the good of thy Soul. Let not thine Eyes wake without thy Heart. *Chriſt*'s Spouſe can ſay, *I ſleep, but my heart waketh*, Cant. 5. 4. But how much more would ſhe ſay, Mine Eyes wake, and my Heart alſo?

5. WHEN thou canſt not Sleep, labour to ſee him that is Inviſible: One Glimpſe of that Sight, is worth more than all the Sleep thine Eyes is capable of. Reſign thy ſelf into his hands, to be at his Diſpoſal. What is this ſweet Acquieſcence, but the Reſt of the Soul? Which if thou find'ſt in thy ſelf, thou ſhalt quietly digeſt the Want of Bodily Repoſe.

6. THOU wanteſt Sleep: Take heed of aggravating thine Affliction: It is only a Loſs, but not of Senſe; a want of what thou wiſheſt, not a pain of what thou feeleſt. Alas! How many which want Reſt, are tortur'd with intolerable Torments in all Parts of their Body; who would think themſelves happy in thy Condition, Might they purchaſe Eaſe? how gladly would they forbear Reſt? Be not therefore troubled for want of Reſt; but be thankful that no worſe Evil attends thee.

7. THOU lack'ſt Sleep; a thing we deſire not ſo much for its own ſake, as for Health. What if *God* be pleaſed to give thee Health without it? It is reported of a Woman in *Padua*, that continued fifteen Days and Nights without Sleep: And *Seneca* tells us of great *Mecænas*, that in three Years he ſlept not the ſpace of an Hour: Which *Lipſius* thinks good to mitigate with a favourable Conſtruction, conceiving an Impoſſibility of an abſolute Vigilancy.

8. YET compared with other Inſtances, we have no reaſon to ſcruple that Relation; for the Learned *Heurnius* tells us, upon good Aſſurance, when he was Student in *Padua*; *Nizolius* the famous *Ciceronian*, liv'd ten Years without Sleep.

9. BUT that exceeds all Example, which Monſieur *Goulart* reports, of a Gentlewoman, who for Thirty five Years remain'd without Sleep, and found In-

Goul. *Hiſtoires Memorables.*

Inconvenience, or Diſtemper, as was atteſted by her Husband and Servants. *The Hand of* God *is not ſhortned*: He who miraculouſly preſerved the Maid of *Meures* ſo many Years without Meat; hath ſuſtain'd the Lives of theſe fore-mentioned Perſons thus long without Sleep; that it might appear, *Man lives not by Meat*, or Sleep only, *but by every word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God*, Mat. 4. 4. Luk. 4. 4. Deut. 8. 3. If he pleaſes to bleſs thee with a watchful Health, the Bleſſing is far greater, than if he allow'd thee to ſleep out thy time in a dull unprofitable Reſt.

10. THOU wanteſt Sleep: *Behold, he that keepeth* Iſrael, *doth neither ſlumber nor ſleep*, Pſal. 121 4. Thoſe Bleſſed Spirits, that continually behold the Face of *God*, never ſleep: For Sleep is a Symptom of Mortality; and the leſs we partake of it, we come the nearer to thoſe Spiritual Natures, whoſe Perfection requires no Reſt. The retir'd Chriſtians, in Primitive Times, affecting to come near an Angelical Life, wilfully repelled Sleep; till it neceſſarily forc'd it ſelf upon them. Thou ſuffer'ſt no more out of the Diſtemper of Humours, or unnatural Obſtructions, than better Men have willingly attracted out of holy Reſolutions. It is but our Conſtruction, that makes thoſe things tedious, which have prov'd eaſie to others.

11. THOU wanteſt Sleep: Have *Patience* a while; thou art going where there ſhall be no need, nor uſe of it: And in the mean time, thy Better Part cannot reſt: Though the Gates be ſhut, that it cannot ſhew it ſelf, yet it ever will be active. As for this Lump of Earth, it ſhall ere long ſleep its full; where no Noiſe can wake it, till *The Voice of the Arch Angel, and the Trumpet of God* ſhall call it up in the Morning of the Reſurrection, 1 *Theſſ.* 4. 16.

A Prayer when Repoſe is Obſtructed.

O GOD, the keeper of Iſrael, *who neither ſlumbreſt nor ſleepeſt, yet thy Omnipotency knows without it, poor Duſt and Aſhes cannot ſubſiſt; it was by thy Almighty Power, that King* Ahaſuerus *one Night was deprived of his Repoſe in his Royal Bed, and yet through thy Gracious Providence, thy Holy Apoſtle St.* Peter *Slept quietly, though ſtrongly Guarded by Soldiers, and Chained faſt in a Dark Priſon: But, O thou, that giveſt thy Beloved reſt, Behold, I beſeech thee, with thine All-ſeeing Eye, how my Sleep is departed from me, inſomuch that I am become infirm in Body, for want of that natural reſt, which many through thy tender Mercy Enjoyes.*

2. *LORD, but of the Rich Treaſure of thy Tranſcendent Goodneſs, have Compaſſion upon my Weak and Frail Conſtitution, which yet requireth further nutriment. Lord, ſuffer not any Cares or Fears to perplex my Thoughts any longer at this Seaſon, but ſo Compoſe all my Senſes in this Dark and Silent Night, that I may lay me down in Peace, and take my reſt in Safety: O hear me, and anſwer me in thy own due time, that when my Body ſhall receive its due Refreſhment, my Mind may be perpetually Vigilant to ſerve thee, unto my Lives end: Grant this, O Father, for thy dear Sons ſake, my only Lord and Saviour.* Amen,

SECT

SECT. XV.

Of Gray-Hairs.

1. GRAY-HAIRS is that we desire to aspire to; and when attain'd, are ready to complain our greatest Misery; verifying in part that old Observation, *That Wedlock and Age are things which we desire, and repent of.* Is this our Ingratitude or Inconstancy, that we are weary of what we wish'd for? Perhaps this Accusation may not be Universal: There is difference in Constitutions, and latitude in Old Age. Infancy and Youth have their limits, age admits of no certain Determination.

2. AT Seventy, *King David was old and stricken in Years; and they cover'd him with Cloaths, but he got no heat,* 1 King. 1. 1. Whereas *Caleb* can profess, *Now loe I am fourscore and five Years old, and yet I am as strong this day, as I was in the day that* Moses *sent me to spy out the Land: As my Strength was then, even so is my Strength now, for war, both to go out, and come in,* Josh. 14. 10, 11. And beyond him, *Moses was an hundred and twenty Years old; when he died, his Eye was not dim, nor his Natural Force abated,* Deut. 34. 7. *Methuselah* was but Old, when he was *Nine hundred sixty and nine,* Gen 5. 27.

3. BUT for the generality of Mankind, the same *Moses,* who liv'd to see an hundred and twenty, hath set Man's ordinary Period at half his own: Psal. 90. 10. *The days of our Age, are threescore Years and ten. And tho Men be so strong, that they come to fourscore Years, yet is their Strength but Labour and Sorrow: So passeth it away, and we are gone.* Fourscore Years, are load enough for the Strength, much more for the weakness of Age. But when Labour

Labour and Sorrow are added to the Weight, how can we but ſink under the Burden?

4. HE was old and wiſe, that ſaid by Experience; *That our laſt Days are the Dregs of our Life: The clearer part is gone, and all drawn out, the Lees ſink down to the bottom.* Who can expreſs the miſerable Inconveniencies that attenſt the Aged? For Cares muſt needs be multiplied according to the manifold occaſions of Affairs: For the World is a Net, wherein the more we ſtir, we are Entangled.

5. AND for Bodily Grievances, What Varieties do we meet withal? What *Aches* in the *Bones*, *Pains* in the *Joynts*, *Convulſions* of *Sinews*, and *Torments* in the *Bowels*; the *Stone*, *Collick*, *Stranguary*, and *Diſtillation of Rheums*? What *Hollow Coughs*, *weakneſſes* of *Retention*, *Expulſion*, *Digeſtion*, and *Decay of Senſes*? So that Age is the common *Sewer*, into which all Diſeaſes of our Life are Evacuated. Well therefore might *Sarah* ſay, *After I am waxed Old, ſhall I have Pleaſure?* Gen. 18. 12. And good *Barzillai* juſtly excuſes himſelf for not accepting the gracious Invitation of *David*, 2 Sam. 19. 35. *I am this day fourſcore Years old, and can I diſcern between Good and Evil? Can thy Servant taſte what I eat, or what I drink? Can I hear any more the voice of Singing-Men, and Singing-Women? Wherefore then ſhould thy Servant be yet a Burden unto my Lord the King?*

6. THESE are they the Preacher calls the *Evil Days*, and *the Years*, wherein a Man ſhall ſay, *I have no Pleaſure in them:* Wherein *the Sun, or the Light, or the Moon, or the Stars are darkned, and the Clouds return after the Rain: When the Keepers of the Houſe ſhall tremble, and the Strong Men ſhall bow themſelves, and the Grinders ceaſe, becauſe they are few, and thoſe that look out of the Windows, be darkned:* Eccleſ. 12. 1, 2, 3. In ſhort, what is Old-Age but the Winter

ter of Life? And how can we expect any other but *gloomy Weather, chilling Frosts, Storms, and Tempests?*

7. BUT whilst we thus querulously aggravate the incommodiousness of Age, we must beware lest we derogate from the Bounty of our Maker, and disparage those Blessings which he accounts Precious; amongst which, Old-Age is none of the meanest. Had he not put that value upon it, he would not have honour'd it with his own Stile; calling himself, *The Ancient of Days?* Dan. 7. 9. 13. 22. Or would he else have set out this Mercy, as a Reward and Obedience to himself, (*I will fulfil the number of thy days*, Exod. 23. 26.) and of Obedience to our Parents, *To live long in the Land*, Exod. 20. 12.

8. WOULD he have promised it as a marvellous Favour to restor'd *Jerusalem*, (now become a City of Truth) *That there shall yet Old Men and Old Women dwell in the Streets of Jerusalem, and every Man with his Staff in his Hand for every Age?* Zach. 8. 4. Would he else have denounc'd it as a Judgment to over-indulgent *Eli*, 1 Sam. 2. 32. *There shall not be an Old Man in thy House for ever?* Far be it from us, to despise that which God Honors, and turn his Blessings into a Curse. For the same God, who best knows the Price of his own Favours, as he makes no small estimation of Age himself, so he hath thought fit to call for a high Respect to be given it by Men, out of an Holy Awe to himself. Lev. 19. 32. *Thou shalt rise up before the hoary Head, and Honor the Face of the Old Man, and fear thy God. I am the Lord.*

9. HENCE it is, that he hath pleas'd to put together the *Ancient, and the Honourable*, Isa. 9. 15. and hath told us that an *Hoary Head is a Crown of Glory, if it be found in the way of Righteousness*, Prov. 16. 31.

Chap.

Chap. 20. 29. And laſtly, makes it an Argument of the deplorable State of *Jeruſalem*, Lam. 4. 16. That *They favoured not the Elders.* Therefore as we too ſenſibly feel what to complain of, ſo we know what Priviledges we may challenge due to Age; even ſuch as Nature hath taught thoſe Heathens, which are in the next degree to Savage. If Pride and Skill have made the *Athenians* Uncivil, yet a Young *Lacedemonian* will riſe, and yield his Place in the Theatre to neglected Age.

10. IT is not a little Injurious to faſten our Eyes upon the diſadvantages of any Condition, as not to take in the Advantages that belong to it; which carefully laid together, may perhaps ſway the Ballance to an equal Poiſe. Suppoſe Old-Age is oppreſs'd with Bodily Griefs; yet it may yield other Immunities to keep the Scales even: And it is not the leaſt, that it gives us firm Reſolutions and bold Securities againſt Dangers, and Death it ſelf: For the Old Man knows how little of his Thred is left in the Winding; and therefore when juſt Occaſion is offer'd, inſiſts not much upon ſo inconſiderable a Remainder.

OLD-AGE and Orbity, as *Ceſelius* profeſs'd, were thoſe things that emboldened him. And when *Caſtritius* refus'd to deliver the Hoſtages of *Placentia* to *Carbo* the *Conſul*, and was threatned with many Swords, he anſwer'd thoſe Menaces with his many Years. What young Man would have been ſo eaſily induc'd to part with his Life, and having been ſo ready to give entertainment to an unexpected Death? Surely the hope and love of Life, commonly ſoftens the Spirits of vigorous Youth, and diſſwades them from thoſe Enterprizes, which are attended with manifeſt Perils: Whereas, extream Age teacheth us to contemn Dangers.

12. YET a greater priviledge of Age, is a Freedom from thoſe impetuous Paſſions wherewith Youth is commonly over-ſway'd; for with our Natural Heat, the Fire of our inordinate Luſts is abated, ſo as our weaker Appetite may be ſubdu'd to Reaſon. The Temperate old Man in the Story, when one ſhew'd him a Beautiful Face, could anſwer; *I have long ſince left to be Eye-ſick*: And could ſay of Pleaſure; *I have gladly withdrawn my ſelf from that Imperious Miſtreſs.*

13. WHAT an unreaſonable Vaſſalage our Youthful Luſts ſubject us to, we need no other Inſtance than in *Sampſon*, who was effeminated by his impotent Paſſion, and weakned to betray his Life to a mercinary Harlot, and to endure to hear her ſay; *Tell me wherewith thou mayſt be Bound, to do thee hurt*, Judg. 16. 6. How eaſily might he have anſwered her; O *Delilah*, even with theſe Cords of Brutiſh Senſuality. How was Solomon Beſotted with his Strange Wives, and drawn away to Worſhip ſtrange Gods, 1 *King*, 11. 5.

14. AND how may Fir-trees howl, when Cedars fall? Who can hope to be free from being tranſported with irregular Affections, when we ſee ſuch great precedents of Frailties? From the danger of theſe ſad Miſcarriages, our Age happily ſecures us; diſpoſing us into quiet Harbour, whence we may ſee Youth toſs'd with Tempeſts of unruly Paſſions, from which Seniority hath free'd us.

15. ANNEX Experimental Knowledge, which Age enriches us; every Dram is worth Pounds of Junior Contentments: In compariſon the Speculative Knowledge is weak and imperfect. This may come at an eaſie rate, perhaps coſt us nothing: That, commonly we pay dear for, and is eſteem'd valuable. If Experience be the Miſtreſs of Fools,

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I'm ſure 'tis the Mother of Wiſdom: For the long Obſervation of variety of Actions and Events in the whole courſe of our Life, muſt needs leave ſuch ſure Rules of Judgment, as may be unfailable Directions for our ſelves and others.

16. IN vain ſhall this be expected from our Minority, which the Wiſe Philoſopher excludes from being Judges of true Morality: And well might the Old Man ſay; *Ye Young Men, think us Old Men Fools; but we Old Men know you Young Men to be Fools.* And indeed what value Ignorance may put upon it, this Fruit of Age the Earth hath nothing equally ſo precious. It was Prophane, but fit for the Mouth of an Heathen Poet, *That Prudence is above Deſtiny.* But ſurely a Chriſtian may juſtly ſay, That next to Providence, Humane Prudence may challenge the ſupream Place in Earthly Affairs, and Age claim the greateſt Intereſt in that Vertue.

17. YOUNG *Elihu* could ſay, *Job* 32. 7. *Multitude of years ſhould teach Wiſdom.* And the Wiſe Man, *Eccluſ.* 25. 4, 5. *Oh, how comely a thing is Judgment for Gray-Hairs, and for Ancient Men to know Counſel! Oh, how comely is the Wiſdom of Old Men, and Underſtanding and Counſel to Men of Honor.* And the *Grecians* could ſay, *That young Men are for Action, and old Men for Advice*: And among the *Romans, Senators* take their Name from Age. That which cauſeth weakneſs of Aged Eyes, is, they better diſcern things further off, and by the ſtrength of their Mental Eyes, they perceive Judgments or Advantages at a diſtance, and accordingly frame their Determinations.

18. IT is obſerv'd, that Old Lutes ſound better than New. It was *Rehoboam*'s Folly and Undoing, 1 *King.* 12. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, *&c.* to follow the Advice of Green Heads, and abandon thoſe Grave Senators

Senators of his Fathers Counſel. Not that Age of it ſelf is Rich in Wiſdom and Knowledge: But well cultur'd, and improv'd, is valuable. There are Old Men, that live, and have a Being upon Earth, who can give no Proof of their many Years, but only Gray-Hairs and Infirmities. There are thoſe, who, like to *Hermogenes*, are Old, whilſt Young; and Children, when Old: Theſe the Elder they grow, are more ſtupid.

19. TIME is an ill Meaſure of Age, which ſhould rather be meted by Proficiency, Ripeneſs of Judgment, and Monuments of commendable and uſeful Labours. If we have thus imployed our ſelves, our *Autumn* will ſhew what our *Spring* was; and our Gray-Hairs will give us more Cauſe to fear Pride, than Dejection. We accuſe Age of many Weakneſſes and Indiſpoſitions: But theſe Imputations are not Univerſal: Many of theſe are Faults of the Perſon, not of the Age. All Wine doth not ſowr with Age, neither doth every Nature.

20. OLD Oyl is clearer, and hotter in Medicinal Uſes than New. Some are pettiſh, and moroſe in Youth; and others are mild, gentle and ſociable, in their decayed Years. Some are crazy in their Prime; and others in their Wain are Vigorous: And many before the fulneſs of their Age, have loſt their Memory; as *Hermogenes*, *Corvinus*, *Antonius Carracalla*, *Georgius Trapezuntius*, and *Nizolius*.

21. SOME, whoſe intellectuals have ſo happily held out, that they have been beſt at the laſt. *Plato* at fourſcore and one, died with his Pen in his hand: and *Demoſthenes*, when Death Summon'd him at an 100 Years, he bemoan'd himſelf, that he muſt now die, when he began to gain knowledge. And as for Spiritual Graces and Improvements, the *Pſalmiſt* ſatisfies us, *Pſal.* 92. 12, 13. *Such as be planted*

ed in the Houſe of the Lord, ſhall flowriſh in the Courts of our God: They ſhall alſo bring forth more fruit in their Age; and ſhall be fat and well liking.

22. BUT the chief Benefit of Age is, our approach to our Journeys end: For the end of motion is reſt; and once attain'd, their remains nothing but fruition: Now Age brings us after a weary Race within ſome breathings of our Journeys end: For if Young Men may die, Old Men muſt; a condition which a carnal heart bewails and abhors, complaining of nature as Niggardly in Diſpenſations of the ſhorteſt time to her nobleſt Creatures; and envying the Oaks, which many generations muſt leave ſtanding and growing.

23. NO marvel, the Worlding thinks himſelf at home, and looks upon Death as a baniſhment: He hath placed his heav'n here below, and can ſee nothing in his remove, but Annihilation, or Torment: But for Chriſtians, who know, that *whilſt we are preſent in the body, we are abſent from the Lord*, 2 Cor. 5. 6. and do juſtly account our ſelves Foreigners, our Life a Pilgrimage, Heaven our Home; how can we but rejoice, that after a tedious and painful Travel, we do now draw near the threſhold of our Father's houſe; wherein we know there are *many Manſions*, and all Glorious, *John* 14. 2.

24. I could bluſh to hear a *Heathen* ſay, if God would offer me the choice of renewing my Age, and returning to my Childhood, I ſhould heartily refuſe it; for I ſhould be loath, after I have paſſed ſo much of my Race to be recalled back from the Goal, to the Bars of my firſt ſetting out; and to hear a Chriſtian ſighing and ſobbing at the thought of his Diſſolution. Where is our Faith of a Heav'n, if after long Sea-beaten, we are loath to think of putting into the ſafe Harbour of Immortality?

A

A Prayer for the Aged.

O *LORD GOD, of my Salvation, I humbly render thee all hearty thanks for thy abundant Mercies and Favours, Spiritual and Temporal, for thy Gracious Preſervation of me from my Youth, untill this preſent Moment: That thou haſt ſpared me in thy Fatherly Mercy, when in thy Juſtice thou mighteſt have deſtroyed me: Lord, as thou haſt given me ſpace for Repentance, and reſerv'd me to theſe Years, who mighteſt juſtly have cut off the days of a miſpent Youth, ſo now accompliſh thine own Work; give me an Heart faithfully to adhere unto thee, that I may conſtantly Endeavour to Redeem the many Errors of my life paſt, by becoming a Pattern of Faith, and Obedience, in all thoſe with whom I Converſe with for the Future: Lord, fill me with thy Holy Spirit, that I may bear more fruit in my Age: Forſake me not now, I am Old and Gray-Headed: Neither Remember the Sins and Follies of my Youth.*

2. *O let thy Power appear in my Weakneſs, and the Operation of thy Spirit in the Decays and Ruins of this Earthly Tabernacle, by the evident repair of thine own Image in me, Mortifying the remainds of Sin, and aſſuring me of my Election and Calling in* Chriſt Jeſus: *And now, O Lord, that the time of my departure draweth nigh, give me a vigilant Spirit, that I may be ready when thou Summoneſt me: Lord, there are but few ſteps between me and this Worlds period; O ſtrengthen me with thy Grace, give me a lively Faith, an Invincible and Conſtant perſeverance in this Race, of the few and evil dayes of this Earthly Pilgrimage; that by thy merciful Aſſiſtance I may ſo run that I may obtain: That when thou pleaſeſt to give me reſt from my Labours, and gather me to my Fathers, I may againſt all the pains and Sorrows of Death, willingly and cheerfully, yield up my Soul, into*

thy Gracious Hands, in full assurance of my Redeemption and Salvation, through Jesus Christ *our Lord.* Amen.

SECT. XVI.

Of Mortality.

1. THOU feareſt *Death*: The Holieſt, Wiſeſt, and Strongeſt have done no leſs: He is *King of Terrors*, and muſt command. Thou mayſt hear the Man after *God*'s own heart ſay, *Pſal.* 116. 3. *The ſorrows of Death compaſſed me*: And *Pſal.* 88. 3, 4, 5. *My Soul is full of troubles, my life draweth nigh to the Grave: I am counted with them that go down to the Pit, as a Man that hath no ſtrength; free among the Dead.* And Good *Hezekiah*, upon the meſſage of Death, *Chattered like a Crane or a Swallow, and went mourning as a Dove*, Iſa. 38. 14.

2. THOU feareſt as a Man; but muſt ſtrive too vercome as a Chriſtian: which thou mayſt perform, if from the terrible aſpect of the Meſſenger, thou caſt thine eyes upon the Amiable Face of God that ſends him. Holy *David* ſhews the way, *Pſal.* 18. 5, 6. *The ſnares of Death prevented me: In my diſtreſs I called upon the Lord, and cryed unto my God; and he heard my voice out of his Temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears*: He that is *our God, is the God of Salvation; and unto God the Lord belong the iſſues of death*, Pſal. 68. 20.

3. MAKE *God* thy Friend, and *Death* ſhall be an *advantage*, *Phil.* 1. 21. It is true what the Wiſe Man ſaid, *Wiſd.* 1. 13. *Chap.* 2. 24. that *God made not death; but through envy of the Devil death came into the World*: But though God made him not, he is pleas'd to employ him as his Meſſenger to Summon

ſome

ſome to Judgment, and Invite others to Glory; and thoſe the *Pſalmiſt* makes mention of, are theſe latter; *Pſal.* 116. 15. *Precious in the ſight of the Lord is the Death of his Saints*: And what reaſon haſt thou to abominate that which God accounts precious?

4. THOU art afraid of *Death*: Acquaint thy ſelf with him more, and thou wilt fear him leſs. *Bears* and *Lyons*, at the firſt ſight affright us, but upon frequent viewing loſe their Terror: Inure thine eyes to the ſight of Death, and that Face ſhall not diſpleaſe thee. Thou muſt ſhortly dwell with him for a long time, *for the days of darkneſs are many*, *Eccl.* 11. 8. but in the mean time entertain him, as the bleſſed Apoſtle doth, 1 *Cor.* 15. 31. *I proteſt by your rejoycing which I have in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord, I dye daily.*

5. INVITE him to thy Board, lodge him in thy Bed, diſcourſe him in thy Cloſet, and walk with him in thy Garden, as *Joſeph* of *Arimathea* did; and by no means ſuffer him to be a ſtranger to thy thoughts: This familiarity ſhall bring thee to delight in his company whom thou didſt formerly dread, then thou mayeſt with the bleſſed Apoſtle ſay, *Phil.* 1. 23. *I have a deſire to be with Chriſt, which is far better.*

6. THOU art grievouſly afraid of *Death*: Fears are apt to imagin, and aggravate evils: Even *Chriſt* himſelf walking upon the *waters*, and the *Diſciples* trembled, as at ſome dreadful Apparition; perhaps thou lookſt at *Death* as ſome utter abolition, or extinction of thy being; and nature muſt needs ſhrink at the thought of not being at all: This is an ill and dangerous miſpriſion: For it is but departing, which thou call'ſt Death.

7. SEE how God ſtiles it to *Abraham*; *Thou ſhalt go to thy Fathers in peace, thou ſhalt be buried in a good*

old Age, Gen. 15. 15. And *Jacob*, *Gen.* 49. 33. When *Jacob* had ended commanding his Sons; he gathered up *his feet into the bed, and yielded up the Ghoſt, and was gathered unto his People.* So that dying is going to our Fathers, and gathering to our People, with whom we ſhall live in a better World, and re-appear Glorious, Let but thy Faith repreſent Death to thee in this ſhape, and he will not appear terrible.

8. DO but obſerve in what familiar terms God Confer'd with *Moſes* concerning his Death, *Deut.* 32. 49. *Get thee up into this Mountain* Abarim *unto Mount* Nebo, *which is in the Land of* Moab, *and behold the Land of* Canaan, *which I gave unto the Children of* Iſrael *for a Poſſeſſion, and dye in the Mount whither thou goeſt up, and be gathered to thy People, as* Aaron *thy Brother died in Mount* Hor, *and was gathered to his People:* So it is no more, *go up there and dye*; ſhould it have been go a days Journey in the Wilderneſs to Sacrifice, it could have been no otherwiſe expreſſed; or as if it were all one to go up to *Sinai* to meet with *God*, and go up to *Nebo* and dye. Neither is it otherwiſe with us; only the difference is, that *Moſes* muſt firſt view the Land of Promiſe, and then dye; whereas we muſt firſt dye, and then ſee the Promiſed Land.

9. THOU art troubled with the fear of Death: What reaſon haſt thou to be Afflicted with that which is common to Mankind? Remember the words of *Joſhua*, *Joſh.* 23. 14. *Behold this day* (ſaith he) *I am going the way of all the Earth.* If all the Earth go this way, couldſt thou think there is a by-path left thee to tread in, were it ſo that *Monarchs, Princes, Patriarchs, Prophets* and *Apoſtles* were allow'd any eaſier paſſage out of the World, thou mightſt perhaps repine at a painful diſſolution, but now ſince all go one way, there can be no ground for a diſcontented murmur.

10.

10. GRUDGE if thou wilt, that thou art a man, but grudge not that being a man thou muſt dye: It is true, thoſe whom the laſt day ſhall find alive, ſhall not *dye, but* they *ſhall be changed*; 1 Cor. 15. 51, 52. but this change ſhall be an Annalogical Death a ſpeedy Conſumption of all our corrupt and droſſy Parts; ſo as the pain muſt be the more intenſe, by its ſhortneſs, than in the ordinary courſe of death. Briefly, that *change* is *death*, and our *death* is a *change*, as *Job* ſtiles it, *Job* 14. 14. The difference is not in the pain, but in the ſpeed of the Tranſaction: *Fear not then the ſentence of Death; remember them that have been before thee, and that come after, for this is the ſentence of the Lord over all fleſh,* Eccluſ. 41. 3.

11 THOU feareſt *Death*: So do not Infants, Children, or Diſtracted Perſons, as the *Philoſopher* obſerves: Why ſhould reaſon render us more Cowardly, than defect of reaſon doth them? Thou feareſt that which others wiſh for: *O Death, how acceptable is thy ſentence to the needy, and to him whoſe ſtrength faileth, that is now in the laſt age, and is vexed with all things, and to him that deſpaireth, and hath loſt patience*: Eccluſ. 41. 2. *Wherefore is light given* (ſaith *Job*) *to him that is in miſery, and life unto the bitter in Soul? Which long for hid Treaſures; which rejoice exceedingly, and are glad when they can find the grave?* Job 3. 20, 21, 22.

12. HOW many invite the violence of *Death*, and if refus'd, do, as *Ignatius* threatned he would do to the *Lyons*, force his Aſſault? *Death* is the ſame to all: The Difference is in the Diſpoſition of the Entertainers; could'ſt thou looſt upon *Death* with their eyes, he would be as welcome to thee as to them: At leaſt, why ſhouldſt thou not labour to have thy heart ſo wrought upon, that this Face of *Death* which ſeems lovely and deſirable to ſome, may not appear over-terrible to thee? 13.

13. THOU art afraid to die: Could'ſt thou have been capable in the Womb, of the uſe of reaſon, thou wouldſt have been more afraid of coming into the World, than thou art of going out: For why ſhould we be more afraid of the better, than of the worſe? *Better is the day of death, than the day of ones birth*, ſaith the Preacher: *Eccleſ.* 7. 2. better every way; our birth begins our miſeries, our death ends them: The one enters the beſt into a wretched World, but the other enters the good into a World of Glory: Certainly, were it not for our infidelity, as we came crying into the World, ſo we ſhould go rejoycing out: And as ſome have ſolemnized their Birth-day with feaſting and triumph, the Primitive Church hath enjoyned rejoycing upon the Dying day of her Martyrs and Saints.

14. THOU abhorreſt *Death*, and fleeſt from it as from a Serpent: but doſt thou know his ſting is gone? what harm is there in a ſting-leſs Snake? Haſt thou not heard of ſome delicate Dames that have carried 'em in their Boſom for coolneſs, and pleaſure of their ſmoothneſs? *The ſting of Death is Sin*; 1 Cor. 15. 56. He may hiſs and wind about us, but cannot prejudice us when that Sting is out: Look up, O thou believing Soul, to thy bleſſed Saviour, who hath pluckt out this ſting of Death, and happily triumphs over it; *O Death where is thy ſting? O Grave where is thy Victory?* 1 Cor. 15. 55.

15. THY Soul and Body, old Companions are loth to part: It is but forbearing their Society a while; they but take leave of other till they meet at the Reſurrection in the mean time they are ſafe, and the better part happy: It is commendable in the *Jews* (otherwiſe the worſt of Men) that they call their Grave *Beth Chajim*, the Houſe of the Living; and when they return from Burial of their Neigbours, they pluck up Graſs, and caſt it into the Air, with thoſe words

words of the *Pſalmiſt*, 72. 16. *They ſhall flouriſh and put forth as Graſs upon the Earth.*

16. DID we not believe a Reſurrection of the one part, and a re-uniting of the other, we had reaſon to be daunted with thoughts of a Diſſolution: But now we have no cauſe to be diſmayed with a little Intermiſſion. It was the ſaying of a Wiſe Heathen, That Death which we ſo fear and flee from, doth but reſpite Life for a while, not take it away: The day will come which ſhall reſtore us to Light again: Settle thy Soul in this aſſurance, and thou canſt not be diſcomfited with a neceſſary Parting.

17. THOU art afraid of Death; when thou art weary of thy days labour, art thou afraid of reſt? Hear what thy Saviour, who is the *Lord of Life*, eſteems of *Death*, Joh. 11. 11. *Our Friend Lazarus ſleepeth*; and of *Jarius* his Daughter, Matt. 9. 24. *The Maid is not Dead, but Sleepeth*: Neither uſeth the Spirit of God any other Language, concerning his Servants under the Old Teſtament: *Now ſhall I ſleep in the Duſt*, ſaith holy *Job*, *Job* 7. 21. and of *David*, 2. *Sam.* 7. 12. *When thy days be fulfilled, thou ſhalt ſleep with thy Fathers*; nor yet under the New: *For this cauſe many are weak and ſickly among you, and many ſleep*, ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 11. 30.

18. THE *Philoſophers* were wont to call *Sleep* the *Brother of Death*; but God ſays, Death is no other than Sleep it ſelf; a Sleep ſure and ſweet: When thou lieſt down at Night to thy Repoſe, thou canſt not be certain to awake in the Morning, as when thou layeſt thy ſelf down in Death, thou art ſure to wake in the Morning of the Reſurrection. Out of this Bodily Sleep, thou may'ſt be ſtartled with ſome noiſe of Horror, fearful Dreams, Tumults, or allarms of War; but here thou ſhalt reſt quietly in the place of Silence, free

from all internal and external Disturbances, and in the mean time thy Soul shall see none but Visions of Joy and Blessedness.

19. BUT, oh the sweet and hearty expression of our last rest, and the Issue of our happy resuscitation, which our holy Apostle hath laid forth, for the consolation of his mournful *Thessalonians*, 1 Thess. 4. 14. *For if we believe, that Jesus died and rose again; Even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.* So that our belief is Antidote enough against the worst of *Death:* And why are we troubled, when we believe *Jesus* dyed, and what a Triumph is this over *Death*, that the same *Jesus* who dyed, rose again? And what a comfort is it, that the same *Jesus* who arose, shall come again and bring all his with him in Glory? And lastly, what a strong Cordial is this to all good Hearts, that all which die well, sleep in Jesus? Thou thoughtest, perhaps, of sleeping in the Bed of the *Grave*; and there indeed is Rest: But he tells thee of sleeping in the Bosom of Jesus; and there is Immortality and Blessedness. O blessed *Jesu, in thy presence is the fulness of Joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore*, Psal. 16. 12. Who would desire to walk in the World, when he may sleep in Christ.

20. THOU feareſt *Death*: But on what terms, doth *Death* present himself to thee: If as an Enemy, (as the *Apostle* stiles him) 1 *Cor.* 15. 26. *The last Enemy that shall be destroyed is Death*, thy unpreparedness will make him dreadful; but thy readiness and fortitude takes off his terror; If as a Messenger of God he is sent to convey thee to happiness, what reason hast thou to be afraid of thine own bliss? It is one thing what Death is in himself, a privation of Life; such as nature cannot chuse but abhor; Another what he is by Christ made unto

us;

us; and introduction to Life, and a harbinger to Glory.

21. WHY, would the Lord of Life yield unto Death, and by yielding vanquiſht him; but to alter and ſweeten him to us; and of a fierce Tyrant, make him a Friend and Benefactor? And if we look upon him thus changed, and reconciled. how can we chuſe but bid him welcome?

22. THOU art afraid of the pangs of Death: Some have dyed without any great ſenſe of pain: Some have yielded up their Souls without a groan: And how knoweſt thou, what meaſure God hath allotted thee? Our Death is a Sea-Voyage, (The holy *Apoſtle*, deſired *to lanch forth*, Phil. 1.) wherein ſome find a rough and tempeſtuous paſſage; others calm and ſmooth: Such thine may prove; and ſo thy diſſolution may be eaſier than a fit of ſickneſs.

23. BUT if *God* had determined otherwiſe, *look unto Jeſus the Author and Finiſher of our Faith*; (Heb. 12. 2.) the Son of *God*, the Lord of Glory; ſee with what Agonies he conflicted, what torments he endured for thee: Look upon his Bloody Sweat, Bleeding Temples, Furrowed Back, Nailed Hands and Feet, Rack'd Joints, and Pierc'd Side: Hear his ſtrong Cries, conſider the Shame, Pain and Curſe of the Croſs which he underwent for thy ſake: Say whether thy ſufferings can be comparable to his. He is a Cowardly and Unworthy *Soldier* that follows his *General* ſighing. Behold, theſe are the ſteps wherein thy God and Saviour hath trod before thee: Walk on couragiouſly in this deep and bloody way; and after a few paces thou ſhalt overtake him in Glory: *For if we ſuffer with him, we ſhall alſo reign with him*, 2 Tim. 2. 12.

24. THOU ſhrink'ſt at the thoughts of *Death*: Is it not for over-valuing *Life*, and making *Earth* thy home?

home? Rich Perſons that live at eaſe are loth to ſtir abroad, eſpecially upon hard and ſtormy *Voyages*: Perhaps 'tis ſo with thee; wherein I cannot but much pity thy weakneſs, in placing thy contentment, where a wiſer Man could find nothing but *vanity and vexation.*

25. ALAS, what is our Exile, if this be our home? What entertainment to be enamour'd on? Diſtempered humours, hard uſages, violent paſſions, and bodily ſickneſſes; ſad complaints, diſappointed hopes, and frequent miſcarriages, Momentany Pleaſures mixt with ſorrows, and laſtly, umbrages, of joy, and real miſeries: Doth theſe ſo bewitch thee, that when Death calls, thou art ready to reply, as the Devil to our Saviour, Mat. 8. 29. *Art thou come to torment me before the time?*

26. ARE theſe ſuch contentments, as allures thee to the World, as St. *Peter* was to Mount *Tabor*, Mat. 17. 4. *Maſter, It is good for us to be here*, if thou have any Faith in thee, look up to the other World, where thou art going and ſee whether that true Life, pure Joy, perfect Felicity, and Eternity, may not be worthy to draw thy heart to a longing deſire of Fruition, and a Contempt of what the Earth can promiſe, in compariſon of infinite bleſſedneſs.

Advancement of Learning.

27. IT was one of the defects which Sir *Francis Bacon* found in Phyſicians that do not ſtudy Remedies to procure the eaſie paſſage of their Patients, through the Gates of Death: Such helps I leave to the care of the skilful Sages of Nature; the uſe I ſuppoſe muſt be with caution, leſt whilſt they endeavour to ſweeten Death, they ſhorten Life.

28. BUT let me preſcibe this ſpiritual means of thine happy *Euthanaſia*; which is a faithful diſpoſition of the labouring Soul, that can truly ſay with

Timothy,

Timothy, 2 Tim. 1. 12. *I know whom I have believed:* and Chap. 4. 7, 8. *I have fought a good fight; I have finiſhed my courſe; I have kept the Faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteouſneſs, which the Lord the Righteous Judge ſhall give me at that day.*

29. THOU ſtarteſt at the mention of Death: How canſt thou but bluſh to read of *Socrates*, when the Meſſage of Death was brought him; applauded the News with much joy: Or, of a Cardinal of *Rome*, that received the Intimation of his approaching Death, Cry'd out, *the news is good and welcome*! Is not their Confidence thy Shame; who believing *that when our Earthly houſe of this Tabernacle ſhall be diſſolved, we have a building of God, an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens*, 2 Cor. 5. 1. yet ſhrinks at the motion of taking poſſeſſion of it? Plato *Phædone*

30. CANST thou with dying *Mithridates* be unwilling to forſake this light! when thou art going to a light more Glorious than the Sun: It is our infidelity, that makes us unwilling to die: Did we think the Soul ſleeps as well as the Body, from the moment of the diſſolution, till the day of Reſurrection, death might be unwelcome.

31. OR, did we think we ſhould wander to unknown places to uncertain entertainment; or fear a ſcorching Tryal upon the Emigration, in flames little inferiour to thoſe of Hell, there were ſome cauſe to tremble at the approach of Death: But we can boldly ſay, with the Wiſe Man, *Wiſd.* 3. 1,2,3. *The Souls of the Righteous are in the hands of God, and there ſhall no torment touch them: In the ſight of the unwiſe they ſeem'd to die, and their departure is taken for miſery, and their going from us to be utter deſtruction; but they are in peace.*

32. OH thou of little Faith, why fearſt thou? Chide thy ſelf, as that dying Saint of old, and ſay, my

my Soul, go boldly forth, what art thou afraid of? Lo, the Angels are ready to receive thee, and carry thee to Glory; leave there this wretched Body, and be poſſeſs'd of Heaven: After a momentary darkneſs upon Nature, thou ſhalt enjoy the Beatifical Viſion of *God*: Be not afraid to be happy, but ſay in Faith what *Jonah* ſaid in Anger; Jonah 4. 3. *It is better for me to dye than to live.*

33. I am afraid to dye: This is Natures voice: But wilt thou hear what Faith ſaith? *To me to live is Chriſt, and to dye is gain.* If therefore Nature reigns in thee, thou muſt be affrighted with Death: But if true Grace be prevalent in thy Soul, that Gueſt ſhall not be unwelcome: Was ever any Man afraid of Profit and Advantage? Such is Death to the Faithful: Whoſoever finds Chriſt his Life, ſhall be ſure to find Death his gain, for he is thereby brought to a near Communion with him: Whereas before he enjoyed him by the dim apprehenſion of Faith, now he clearly and immediately enjoys that Glorious Preſence, which only makes bleſſedneſs.

34. THIS is it that cauſeth *Death* to change his Copy; and renders him who is formidable, pleaſing, and beneficial; *I deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt*, ſaith the Man who was rapt up in the third Heaven; had it been only departing, he had not been in ſuch an extaſie, but to *depart, and to be with Chriſt*, is that which raiſeth his Soul.

35. WHEN *Socrates* was to dye for his Religion, he comforted himſelf with this, that he ſhould go to *Orpheus*, *Homer*, *Muſæus*, and the other Worthies of former Ages; Poor Man! Could he have known *God manifeſted in the fleſh, and received up into Glory*, 1 Tim. 3. 16. and in that glorified ſtate ſitting at the right hand of Majeſty; could he have known the Bleſſed Order of the *Cherubim* and *Seraphim*, *Angels*, *Arch-Angels*, *Principalities* and *Powers*, and

the

the reſt of the moſt Glorious Hierarchy of Heaven; Could he have been acquainted with that Celeſtial Choir of the *Spirits of Juſt Men made Perfect*: Heb. 12. 23. Could he have known the God and Father of Spirits, the Infinite and Incomprehenſible Glorious Diety, whoſe Preſence transfuſes Everlaſting Bleſſedneſs into all thoſe Citizens of Glory, And could he have known that, he ſhould have an undoubted intereſt in that infinite Bliſs; how gladly would he have taken of his *hemlock*, and how joyfully would he have paſſed to that happy World?

36. ALL this we know, and no leſs aſſured then of our preſent being; with what comfort ſhould we think of changing our preſent Condition with a Bleſſed Immortality? How ſweet a Song was that of old *Simeon*? Luke 2. 29. *Lord, now letteſt thou thy Servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have ſeen thy Salvation:* That which he ſaw by the Eye of Sence, thou ſeeſt by the Eye of Faith; even the *Lords Chriſt*; *verſe* 16. he ſaw him in Weakneſs, thou ſeeſt him in Glory; why ſhould'ſt thon not depart, not in peace only, but in joy and comfort?

37. HOW did the Proto-Martyr *Stephen* triumph over the rage of his Enemies, and the fury of Death, when he had once ſeen the *Heavens opened, and the Son of Man ſtanding at the right hand of God?* Acts 7. 56. God offers the ſame bleſſed proſpect to the Eye of thy Soul: Faith is the Key that opens the Heav'n of Heav'ns, fix thy eyes upon that Glorious and Saving Object: Thou canſt not but lay down thy Body in peace, and ſend thy Soul into the hands of him that bought it, with the cheerful and ſweet Recommendation, of *Lord Jeſus receive my Spirit*, Acts 7. 39.

A Prayer at the Hour of Death.

O LORD GOD, *Almighty, I humbly acknowledge my own vileneſs, through the whole courſe of my Life: And ſeeing thou haſt thus long ſpared me, now accompliſh thy Mercy in me: Be thou my God forever, and my Guide unto the end; O Comfort me, now my Heart trembleth in me, and the terrors of Death are fallen upon me, give me the long expected fruits of my hopes propoſed to me in thy Word: O Bleſſed* Jeſu, *who art the Death of death, now ſhew thy ſelf my Saviour: Take from my afflicted Soul the ſting of Death, and aſſure me of Victory: Looſe the Pains, allay the Fears and Sorrows, and Sweeten the bitterneſs of Death, untill in my enjoying thy Preſence it be ſwallowed up in Victory: O Holy Saviour, who haſt had Experience of all our miſeries for Sin, without Sin, and haſt admitted us to be Baptized into the Similitude of thy Death and Reſurrection: Let me now feel in my Languiſhing Soul the Power and Efficacy thereof.*

2. O *Chriſt, whoſe Human Soul, in thy Paſſion for my Redeemption, was heavy unto Death, now mercifully Conſider my Frailty who am now at the point of Diſſolution: O now give me an Invincible Faith in thee, againſt which the Gates of Hell ſhall never prevail, now ſpeak Peace and Comfort to my poor Soul: Thou who poureaſt out thy Soul to Death for me, receive my wearied Spirit to Eternal Life: Let not this fearful paſſage be too bitter to me, but be thou ever preſent with me in all my ſufferings: O Holy Ghoſt the Comforter of all the Elect, leave me not Comfortleſs, let me be gathered to my Fathers in Peace: Bring me to that Life wherein thou haſt promiſed to wipe away all Tears from our Eyes: Where ſhall be no more Death, Sorrow, Pain, nor any bitter Effects of Sin: LORD hear me, O thou, who deſpiſeſt not a broken*

and

contrite Heart, have mercy upon me: Lord receive my Petitions; and in thy appointed hour, come Lord Jesus, *my Saviour and Redeemer, deliver me from this bondage of Corruption, even so come Lord* Jesus, *come quickly.* Amen.

SECT. XVII.

Of Judgment

1. THOU apprehendest true; *Death* is terrible, but *Judgment* more; both succeed upon the same decree; *It is appointed unto Men once to dye, but after this the judgment:* Heb. 9. 27. It is not more terrible, than thought on: *Death,* because he strikes, and lays before us examples of *Mortality,* cannot but sometimes take up our hearts; but the last *Judgment,* having no visible proofs upon our thoughts, too seldom fright us:

2. YET who conceives the Terror of that day? When *the Sun shall be turn'd into darkness, and the Moon into blood,* Acts 2. 20. That day, *which shall burn as an Oven, when all the proud, and all that do wickedly shall be as the stubble;* Mal. 4. 1. That day, *in which the Heavens shall pass away with a great noise; and the Elements shall melt with fervent heat; the Earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burnt up:* 2 Pet. 3. 10. That day, *wherein the Lord Jesus shall be reveal'd from Heaven with his mighty Angels; in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,* 2 Thess. 1. 7, 8. That day, *wherein the Lord will come with fire, and with his Chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire, for by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with*

with all flesh, Isa. 66. 15, 16. That day, *wherein the Son of Man shall come in his Glory, and all the Holy Angels with him; and shall sit upon the Throne of his Glory; and all Nations shall be gathered before him; and he shall separate them one from another, as a Shepherd divideth his Sheep from the Goats*, Mat. 25. 31, 32. And that day, *wherein all the kindreds of the Earth shall wail because of him*, Rev. 1. 7.

3. THAT *great and terrible day of the Lord*, Joel 2. 31. wherein if the powers of Heav'n be shaken, how can the heart remain removed? And if the World be dissolved, who can abide it? Alas, we are ready to tremble at Thunder in a Cloud; and at Lightning that glances our Eyes; what shall we do when the Heavens shall break in pieces, and be on flame about our Ears? *Oh who may abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth?* Mal. 3. 2.

4. YET be of good cheer, amidst all this horror there is comfort; whether thou be one whom it shall please God to reserve upon the Earth to the sight of this dreadful day, he knows in whose hands our times are; but this we are sure of, that we are upon the last days: And we may spit in the Faces of St. *Peters* Scoffers, that say *where is the promise of his coming?* Knowing that the Lord is not slack, but he that shall come, will come, and not tarry, 2 *Pet.* 3. 4, 9. *Heb.* 10. 17. And some may live to see the Son of Man come in the Clouds of Heaven, in this last Scene of the World:

5. IF so, let not thy heart be dismay'd with these fearful things: Thy change shall be sudden, one Moment shall put off Mortality, and clothe thee with Incorruption, not capable of fear and pain: The Majesty of this appearance shall add to thy Joy and Glory: *Thou shalt then see the Lord himself descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Arch-*

Arch-Angel and with the trump of God: Thou ſhalt ſee thy ſelf, *and thoſe other which are alive and remain to be caught up into the Clouds to meet the Lord in the Air; and ſo ſhalt thou be ever with the Lord.* On this Aſſurance, the Apoſtle ſubjoyns, *Wherefore comfort one another with theſe words*, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 16,17,18. And if ever there were comfort in words, not of Men or Angels, but of the God of Truth, theſe will afford it to our trembling Souls.

6. BUT if thou be one whom God hath determin'd to Summon before the great day of his appearance; here is a joy unſpeakable and full of Glory: *For thoſe that ſleep in Jeſus ſhall God bring with him*; 1 *Theſ.* 4.15. They ſhall be of that Glorious Train, which ſhall attend the Great Judge of the World: Yea they ſhall be Co-aſſeſſors to the Lord of Heaven and Earth, in this Judicature; ſitting upon the Bench, when guilty Men and Angels ſhall be at the Bar: *To him that overcometh*, ſaith Chriſt, *will I grant to ſit with me in my throne, even as I alſo overcame, and am ſet down with my Father upon his Throne*, Rev. 3. 21. What place is here for any terror, ſince ſuch heavenly Magnificence, fulneſs of Joy and Eternal Glory?

7. THOU art afraid to think of Judgment; I had rather thou wert awful, than timorous, when St. *Paul*, *Acts* 24. 25. diſcourſed *of the judgment to come*, it is no marvel that *Felix* trembled; But the ſame Apoſtle, when he preſſed to his *Corinthians*, the certainty and generality of our *appearance before the Judgment-Seat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the things done in his body whether good or evil*; adding, *knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we perſwade men; but we are made manifeſt to God*, 2 Cor. 5. 10, 11.

8. THE holieſt Man is not exempted from the dread, but ſlaviſh fear of the great Judge: We know his infinite Juſtice; and are Conſcious of our manifold

fold failings: And how can we acknowledge these, and not fear? But this fear works not in us a Malignant repining at the severe Tribunal of the Almighty, but a careful endeavour to approve our selves that we may be acquitted by him, and appear blameless in his presence. How justly may we tremble, when we look upon our Actions and Deserts? But confidently appear at the Bar, where we are assur'd of a discharge? *Being justified by Faith, we have peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord,* Rom. 5. 1. When we think of a Conflagration of the World, how can we but fear? But when we think of a happy *restitution of all things*; how can we but rejoice in trembling? *Acts* 3. 21.

9. THOU quakest at the expectation of Judgement: Surely the Majesty of that great Assize must needs be formidable: And if the delivery of the Law on Mount *Sinai, (Exod.* 19. 16, 18.) were with so dreadful a Pomp of *Thunder and Lightning, Fire, Smoak and Earthquakes,* that the *Israelites* were half dead with fear in receiving it; with what terrible Magnificence shall God come to require an account of that Law at the hands of the whole sinful generation of Mankind?

10. REPRESENT unto thy thoughts, that which was shewed to the Prophet *Daniel, Dan.* 7. 9, 10. Imagine thou sawst, *the Ancient of days sitting upon a Throne like a fiery flame; a fiery stream issuing and coming forth from before him; thousand thousands ministring unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand standing before him; the judgment set and the Books opened*: Or as *John*, the *Daniel* of the New Testament, saw *Rev.* 20. 11, 12. *A great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose Face the Earth and the Heavens fled away, and the dead both small and great standing before God; and the Books opened and the Dead judged out of those things which were written in those Books, according to their works.*

11.

11. LET the eyes of thy mind foreſee that which theſe bodily eyes ſhall once ſee; and tell me how thou feeleſt thy ſelf affected with the ſight of ſuch a Judge, ſuch an appearance, and ſuch a proceſs: And if thou art in a trembling Condition, cheer thy ſelf with this, that thy Judge is thine Advocate; that upon that Throne ſits not greater Majeſty than Mercy: It is thy Saviour that ſhall ſentence thee; how ſafe art thou then under ſuch hands? Canſt thou fear he will doom thee to death, who dyed to give thee life? Canſt thou fear he will condemn thee for thoſe ſins which he hath given his blood to expiate? Canſt thou fear the rigour of that Juſtice which he hath ſo fully ſatisfied? Or canſt thou miſdoubt the miſcarriage of that Soul he hath ſo dearly bought?

12. NO, all this Divine State and Magnificence makes for thee. Let thoſe guilty and impenitent Souls, *Rom.* 2. 5. who have heaped unto themſelves *Wrath againſt the day of wrath*, quake at the Glorious Majeſty of the Son of God; *for whom nothing remains, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation, which ſhall devour the adverſaries, Heb.* 10. 27. But for thee who art reconciled unto God by the Mediation of the Son of his love, and incorporated into Chriſt, and made a Member of his Myſtical Body; thou art Commanded with all the Faithful, *to look up, and lift up thy head; for now the day of Redemption is come*, Luk. 21. 28. Epheſ. 4. 30.

13. AND indeed it is thy priviledge, ſince by vertue of a bleſſed Union with thy Saviour, this Glory is thine; every Member hath an intereſt in the Honour of the Head. *Rejoyce* therefore *in the day of the Lord* Jeſus, *Phil.* 2. 16. And when the Tribes of the Earth *ſhall wail. Rev.* 1. 7. Do thou Sing and call to the Heavens and Earth to bear thee Company: *Let the Heavens rejoyce, and let the Earth*

be glad: Let the Sea make a noiſe, and all that is therein: Let the Fields be joyful, and all that is in it. Then ſhall all the trees of the wood rejoyce before the Lord: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the Earth, and with righteouſneſs to judge the World, and the People with his Truth, Pſal. 96. 11, 12, 13.

14. THOU art affrighted with the thought of that Great Day: Think oftner, and thou ſhalt leſs fear it; it will come ſurely, and ſuddenly; let thy frequent thoughts prevent it, it will come as a Thief in the Night, without warning or noiſe: Let thy careful vigilance expect it; and thy Soul ſhall not be ſurprized, nor confounded. Thine Audit is ſure and uncertain: Sure that it will be, but uncertain the time. If thou wilt approve thy ſelf a good Steward, have thine Account ready; and ſet thy reckoning even betwixt God and thy Soul: *Bleſſed is that Servant whom his Lord when he cometh ſhall find ſo doing*, Mat. 24. 46.

15. LOOK upon the Heavens, and Earth as Diſſolving; and think with St. *Jerome*, that thou heareſt the laſt Trump, and voice of the Arch-angel ſhrilling in thine Ears, *Ariſe ye dead and come to judgment.* Let it be thy main care, to live Soberly, Righteouſly, and Godly in this preſent World, looking for that Bleſſed Hope, and the Glorious Appearing of the Great God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, who gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity; *Who ſhall change our vile body, that it may be faſhioned like to his Glorious body; according to the working whereby he is able to ſubdue all things to himſelf*, Phil. 3. 21.

A preparatory Prayer of the Judgment to come.

O Omipotent Lord God, who haſt appointed a day wherein thou wilt bring all the world to judgment, with every ſecret thing whether it be good, or whether it be

be evil: O make me try my Soul daily and hourly at the Bar of my own Conſcience, that accuſing and judging my ſelf for my ſins and tranſgreſſions, thou mayſt not condemn me at thy dreadful Tribunal: Lord, let that remarkable day be often in my thoughts, that the fear of it and thee, may be ever before my eyes: And my Conſcience may be kept more pure by the power of that dread and fear; give me an earneſt deſire and a careful endeavour to direct all my ways and to order the whole Courſe of my Life, according to the Rule and Precepts of thy Holy Word; let it be my utmoſt care and diligence to have a good Conſcience in all things, and to live ſo that my Life being approved of thee, my Death may be happy, and my appearance before thee in the day of thy coming ſurrounded with joy and comfort.

2. *GRANT that the Merit of thy Death, and Vertue of thy Reſurrection, may both Mortifie all my Sinful and Corrupt Affections, and raiſe me to the Life of Righteouſneſs, that dying to Sin, and governed here by thy Power, and hereafter Acquitted by thy final Sentence, I may at laſt arrive to a perfect Union with thee, with a full view and eternal enjoyment of thee, and thy Bleſſed Preſence: Grant this through thy Mercies, O Heavenly Father, thy Merits, O Gracious* Jeſu, *and thy Aſſiſtance, O Holy Spirit, Three Perſons, One only Wiſe, Omnipotent and Immortal God, to whom belongeth all Honour, Praiſe, Might, Majeſty and Dominion, in Heaven and Earth, from this time forth and to all eternity.* Amen.

SECT. XVIII.

Spiritual Conflicts.

1. THOU art affrighted at the thought of Spiritual Enemies: Earth nor Hell hath any thing ſo formidable. *Power*, *Malice* and *Subtilty*, are met in them: Neither is it eaſie to ſay in which of theſe

they are moſt eminent. Certainly, were we to match with him on even hands, their was juſt cauſe not of Fear, but Deſpair.

2. I could tremble, thou ſayſt, to think what Satan hath done, and what he can do: With what Conteſtation he enabled the *Egyptian* Sorcerers to ſtand with *Moſes*; how they turn'd their *Rods* into *Serpents*; and ſeemed to have the advantage of many *Serpents* crawling and hiſſing in *Pharaoh*'s Pavement, *Exod.* 7. 12. How they turn'd *waters into blood*, verſ. 22. and brought *Frogs* upon the Land of *Egypt*, *Exod.* 8. 7. as if thus far the power of Hell would preſume to hold Competition with Heaven: What furious Tempeſts he raiſes in the Air, as that from the Wilderneſs beat upon the four corners of the Houſe of *Job*'s eldeſt Son, and overthrew it, Job 1. 19. Now *Job was the greateſt Man in the Eaſt*, Job 1. 3. His Heir dwelt not in a Cottage, but a ſtrong Fabrick, which could not ſtand againſt this *Hurricane* of *Satan*.

3. WHAT fearful Apparitions he makes in upper Regions: What *great wonders*, cauſing *Fire to come down from Heaven on the Earth, in the ſight of Men*, *Rev.* 13. 13. Laſtly, what grievous Tyranny he exerciſeth upon *the Children of Diſobedience*, Eph. 5. 6. Couldſt thou expect any leſs, from thoſe the Spirit of God himſelf ſtyles *Principalities and Powers, and Rulers of the Darkneſs of this World, and ſpiritual wickedneſſes in high Places*, (Eph. 6. 12.) and *the Prince of the Power of the Air*, Eph. 2. 2.

4. SURELY it were no Victory to be a Chriſtian, if we had not powerful Oppoſites; but doſt thou not conſider that this Power is by Conceſſion, and the Exerciſe but with Permiſſion, and Limitation? What Power is their in any Creature, which is not derived from the Almighty? This Meaſure the Infinite Creator was pleaſed to communicate

to

to them, as Angels, which they retain and Exerciſe as Devils; their damnation hath ſtript them of Glory; but we know not how much their ſtrength is abated.

5. AND we may perceive how their Power is bounded? Thoſe that turn'd their Rods into Serpents, could not keep 'em from being devour'd of that one *Serpent* of *Moſes*: Thoſe that brought *Frogs* upon *Egypt*, cannot bring *Lice*; thoſe that were ſuffer'd to bring *Frogs*, loſe that power to take 'em away: Reſtrained Powers muſt know their Limits, and we knowing them, muſt ſet limits to our Fears; a *Lion* chain'd can do leſs harm than a *Cur* looſe: Why art thou concern'd at the powerfulneſs of Spirits, whilſt they by an over-ruling Power are tied to their Stake that they cannot hurt thee?

6. THY Fears are increas'd with their number, which are as many as Powerful: one *Demoniack* was poſſeſſed with a Legion; how many Legions then tempt thoſe Millions of Men upon the face of the Earth, whereof none is free from their Solicitations to evil? That holy Man whom our counterfeit Hermits pretend to imitate, in the Viſion of his retiredneſs, ſaw the Air full of them, and their ſnares for Mankind; and were our Eyes as clear as His, we might perhaps meet with the ſame Proſpect: But be not diſmaid. Couldſt thou borrow the eyes of the Servant of an Holier Maſter, thou ſhouldſt ſee, that *there are more with us, than againſt us*, 2 Kin. 6. 16. Thou ſhouldſt ſee the bleſſed Angels of God, pitching their Tents about thee, as the Powerful, Vigilant and Conſtant Guardians of thy Soul: Theſe are thoſe Valiant ones about thy Bed; *They all hold Swords, being expert in War; every one his Sword upon his Thigh, becauſe of fear in the night*, Cant. 3. 7, 8.

7. FEAR not therefore but make the Lord, *Even the Moſt High, thy Habitation; then there ſhall no*

evil befall thee, neither ſhall any plague come nigh thy dwelling: For he ſhall give his Angels charge over thee in all thy ways, they ſhall bear thee up in their hands leſt thou daſh thy foot againſt a ſtone; and beſides this indemnity. *Thou ſhalt tread upon the Lyon and Adder; the young Lyon and the Dragon ſhalt thou trample under thy feet*, Pſal. 91. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. In ſecular Enmity, true Valour may be oppreſs'd, but not eaſily daunted with Multitude; *I will not be afraid of ten thouſand*, (ſaith *David*) Pſal. 3. 6. and *Pſal.* 118. 12. *They came about me like Bees, but in the Name of the Lord will I deſtroy them.*

8. IT was a brave Reſolution in that General, when a Soldier told him, the *Perſian* Arrows darkned the Sun; be of good chear, ſaid he, then we ſhall fight in the ſhade: Anſwerable to which, was that Heroical Determination of *Luther*, who againſt all Threats and Diſſwaſions, would go into the City of *VVorms*, though as many Devils were in it, as Tiles upon the Houſes; and why ſhould we not imitate this Confidence? What if there were as many Devils in the Air, as are Spires of Graſs upon the Earth? *God is our refuge and ſtrength, as a very preſent help in troulbe; therefore will we not fear, though the Earth be removed; though the Mountains be carryed into the midſt of the Sea*, Pſal. 46. 12. *Behold, God is our Salvation, we will truſt, and not be afraid; for the Lord* Jehovah, *is our ſtrength and our ſong, he alſo is become our Salvation*, Iſa. 12. 2. *Let God ariſe, and let his Enemies be ſcattered; let them alſo that hate him flee before him; like as the ſmoake vaniſheth, ſo ſhalt thou drive them away*, Pſal. 68. 1, 2.

9. BUT oh the malice of thoſe infernal Spirits, is implacable and deadly, whoſe Artifice is Temptation, and Accuſation; whoſe delight Torment, Shrieks, Howlings, Groans and Gnaſhing; whoſe main Drift is the Eternal Damnation of miſerable Mankind!

Mankind! Why ſhould we expect otherwiſe from him, who is a Manſlayer from the beginning? That carries Deſtruction in his Name and Nature? That goes about like a roaring *Lyon*, ſeeking whom he may devour?

10. SURELY, this Malignanty is reſtleſs; on this ſide Hell. But comfort thy ſelf in ſpight of Hells malice, thou art ſafe. Doſt thou not know by thee ſtands the Victorious *Lyon* of the *Tribe* of *Judah*, whom that infernal Fiend dare not look in the Face? Doſt thou not remember, when ſentence was pronounc'd of Eternal Enmity, between the Seed of the Woman, and the Seed of the Serpent, it was with this Doom, *It ſhall bruiſe thy head, and thou ſhalt bruiſe his heel*, Gen. 3. 15.

11. A bruiſe of a Heel is far from the Heart; but a bruiſe of the Serpents Head is Mortal; where his Sting is, there his Life lies: Neither did the Seed of the Woman (Chriſt Jeſus) this for himſelf (who was infinitely above all the Power and Malice of the Devil) but for us the impotent and ſinful Seed of Man: *The God of peace ſhall bruiſe Satan under your Feet*, ſaith the bleſſed Apoſtle, *Rom.* 16. 20. not under his own only: Of whom God the Father had long before ſaid, *Sit thou on my Right Hand, till I make thine Enemies thy Foot-ſtool*, Pſal. 110. 1. But what do I ſpeak of the Future? Already is this great work atchieved: For *the Lord of Life, having ſpoiled Principalities and Powers, hath made a ſhew of them openly, triumphing over them on his Croſs*, Col. 2. 15.

12. ALL the Powers of Hell were dragg'd after this Conquerour, when he advanced upon that Triumphant Chariot. Look therefore on theſe Helliſh Forces, as vanquiſhed; and know that *in all things we are more than Conquerors through him that loved us*, Rom. 8. 37. Only do thou by the power of thy Faith, apply to thy ſelf this great work that thy Victorious Saviour

Saviour hath done for Salvation of all Believers.

13. POWER without Malice were Harmleſs; and Malice without Power Impotent: But when both combine together, they are Dreadful. But, Malice to execute Miſchief, hath Force, or Fraud; now the Malice of Satan prevails more by the latter; and the Subtilty of theſe Malignant Spirits is perniciouſer than their Power: In his Power, he is a *Lion*, *Pſal.* 7. 2. in his *Subtilty*, he is a *Serpent*, Gen. 3. 1. He is that *Old Serpent*, *Rev.* 20. 2. Whoſe craft is marvellouſly increaſed by the Experience of ſo many thouſand Years.

14. THEN the more careful ought we to be, *leſt*, as the Apoſtle ſaith, 2 *Cor.* 2. 11. *Satan ſhould get an advantage of us*: This he ſeeks; and if our Spiritual Wiſdom and Circumſpection be not vigilant, will be ſure to find. It is a Word, too ſublime for us, which the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 Cor. 2. 11. *For we are not ignorant of Satans devices.* Alas, he hath a thouſand that weak Simplicity is not able to reach: The Wiſeſt knows not the Deceitfulneſs of his own heart, much leſs can we dive into the Plots of Hell that are againſt us.

15. WE hear, and are forwarned of *the wiles of the Devil*, Eph. 6. 11. But what his Machinations are, how can we know, or prevent? *Ev'n the Children of this world*, ſaith our Saviour, Luke 16. 8. *are in their Generation wiſer than the Children of Light*: How Craftier is their Father from whom their cunning is deriv'd? Be as humble then as thou wilt; and ſay with *Agur* the Son of *Jakeh*, Prov. 30. 2, 3. *Surely I am more brutiſh then any man, and have not the underſtanding of a man*: *I neither learned Wiſdom, nor have the knowledge of the Holy.*

16. BUT what ever thou art in thy ſelf, know what thou art in Gods eſteem: Conſider what the *Pſalmiſt* impartially profeſſes, *Pſal.* 119. 98. *Thou through*

through thy Commandments, haſt made me wiſer than mine Enemies; for they are ever with me: The Spirit of Wiſdom is ours as well as *Righteouſneſs, Deut.* 34.9. *Eph.* 1.17. 1 *Cor.* 1.30. And he who over-rules Hell, hath ſaid, Mat. 16.18. *The Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt his Church:*

17. WHAT are Hell Gates, but the deep Plots of thoſe Infernal Powers? The *Serpent* is the *Emblem* of *Subtilty*: The *Serpents* of the *Egyptian* Sorcerers, were devoured by *Moſes* his *Serpent*. Wherefore, but to ſhew that all crafty Counſels and Machinations of helliſh Projectors, are eaſily deſtroyed by the Power and Wiſdom of the Almighty: It was the Rod of God that ſwallow'd 'em all, and was ſtill it ſelf, when they were vanquiſhed: And when Satan thought to have won moſt honor to himſelf, attended him ſhame and loſs.

18. WHAT an advantage did the Powers of Darkneſs think to acquire, in drawing our firſt Parents, by their ſubtil Suggeſtions into ſin, and perdition, imagining either Mankind ſhall not, or ſhall be ours? But the Incomprehenſible Wiſdom, and Mercy of God diſappointed their hopes; and took occaſion by Man's fall, to raiſe him to a greater Glory; and ſo order it, that the *Serpents* nibling at the heel, loſt him the breaking of his head. What Trophies did that wicked Spirit think to erect upon the Ruines of miſerable *Job*, and how was that Saint doubled in his Eſtate and Honour, by his conquering Patience?

19. HOW confidenty did the Subtilty of Hell ſay, concerning the Son of God exhibited in the fleſh; *This is the Heir, come let us kill him, and the Inheritance ſhall be ours? Mat.* 21.38. *Mar.* 12.7. *Luke* 20.14. How ſure work did they think they had mrde, when they ſaw him, through their ſubtil procurement, nailed to the croſs, and dying upon

on that tree of ſhame and curſe; when they ſaw him laid under a Sealed and Guarded *Graveſtone*? And now begins their Confuſion and his Triumph; Now doth the Lord of Life trample upon *Death* and *Hell*; and to perfect his own Glory, and Man's Redemption, by his moſt Glorious Reſurrection.

20. AND as it was with the Head, ſo with the Members: When *Satan* had done his worſt, they are zealouſer upon their ſins, and happier upon their miſcarriages; God finds out a way to improve their evils to advantage, and teaches them of *Vipers* to make Soveraign *Treacles*, and ſafe and powerful *Trochiſes*. The Temptations of *Satan*, ſent from his *Power*, *Malice*, and *Subtilty*, are but fiery darts, for their Suddenneſs, Impetuoſity, and Penetration: If we can hold *the Shield of Faith before us*, Eph. 6. 16. They ſhall not be quenched, but retorted in the Face of him that ſends them; and we ſhall with the holy Apoſtle find and profeſs, that, *In all things we are more then Conquerors, through him that loved us*; Rom. 8. 37. And in a bold defiance of all the Powers of Darkneſs, ſay, (*ver.* 38, 39.) *I am perſwaded, that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the love of God which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.*

A Prayer in Spiritual Conflicts.

O *Bleſſed* Jeſu! *the Lord of Life, Prince of Glory, and Captain of our Salvation! the perplexing trouble of my deſtracting thoughts, do by their ſly inſinuations and ſecret importunities diſturb the quiet of my mind, and make my holy duties become a wearineſs to my Soul: They cool the heat, they damp the Vigor, and dead the Comfort of all my Devotions: Yea, even when I beſeech*

God

God to forgive my ſins, I then ſin whilſt I am praying for forgiveneſs; whether it be in the Church or the Cloſet, ſo Frequently and ſo Violently do theſe vain thoughts withdraw my heart from thy ſervice, that I cannot have confidence, thou heareſt my Suit, becauſe I know by Experience my own deafneſs; and therefore, ſure, needs muſt thou, O God, be far off from my Prayers, whilſt my heart is ſo far out of thy preſence, and hurried away with a Crowd of vain Imaginations.

2. *But Lord, keep my Faith fixt upon thy Mediation, let me behold thy Incenſe when I offer my Sacrifice, and though diſtractions have withdrawn me from my ſelf, yet let not diſtruſt drive me from my* Jeſus. *O give me an encreaſe of Saving Knowledge, which will prove a ſure means of Sanctifying my thoughts; Mortifie in me all vile Affections and Inordinate Paſſions, and ſuppreſs all evil thoughts and vain Imaginations, and by thy Special Grace, Excite and Cheriſh in me Holy and Spiritual Affections: Thou who haſt vanquiſht Satan and all the powers of Darkneſs; O give Victory to me, and all languiſhing Souls in our Spiritual Conflicts; guide us with thy Counſels, ſuſtain us with thy Grace, refreſh us with thy Comforts, preſerve us in thy Love, and crown us with thy Glory.* Amen. Amen. Hallelujah!

SECT. XIX.

The Character of Patience.

1. PATIENCE is a peaceable diſpoſition of the whole Man, not troubled, nor troubleſome; but abſtaining from whatſoever may diſturb himſelf or others. In its Definition, we may obſerve theſe five heads, firſt the nature of *Patience*; it is peaceable, and quiet; not ſubject to ſudden Paſſion,

Paſſion, light Motions, or ſhort Affections towards it; but an habitual Diſpoſition and due Compoſure of a Mans ſelf, which may bear the impreſſion of *David's* Motto, Pſal. 120. 7. *I am for* Peace.

2. SECONDLY, the ſubject of *Patience*: The whole Man, not the external, but the internal the heart and head; the mind and manners, muſt be diſpos'd, and compos'd towards it: Principally indeed the Heart, *For out of it are the iſſues of Life*, Prov. 4.23. and unleſs there be a *Meek and Quiet Spirit*, 1 *Pet.* 3. 4. It is impoſſible to acquire it, but withall there muſt be a quiet *Hand*, *Pſal.* 24.4. A quiet *Eye*, Job 31. 1. A quiet *Ear*, Prov. 2. 2. And a quiet *Tongue*, Pſal. 39. 1. And all parts and faculties of the Soul diſpoſed to *Patience.*

3. THIRDLY, the parts of *Patience*, is not in being troubled, or being troubleſom, neither actively impatient in diſpleaſing others, nor paſſively impatient in being diſquieted by others. Fourthly, the practice of Patience, is an abſtinence from whatſoever may diſturb, for ſo the word *Patience* (commonly Tranſlated) doth import: And St. *James* doth thus deſcribe it, *Jam.* 1. 21. *A laying aſide of all filthineſs and ſuperfluity of maliciouſneſs.*

4. FIFTHLY, The Object of *Patience*, or Impatience, either in our ſelves, or others. Men diſquiet themſelves either by Cauſeleſs conceit of offence offered, when it is not: By being too ſuſpicious, and *Inventers of evil things*, Rom. 1. 30. or by too much taking to heart, an offence when it is offered; by being too *Furious*, 2 Tim. 3. 3. Men diſturb others, either in offering occaſion of offence by being *Injurious and Diſorderly*, 2 Theſſ. 3. 11. or by bitter ſeeking Revenge, being full of Maliciouſneſs, *Rom.* 1. 29. So Men likewiſe diſturb themſelves and others; when they continue in their ſins, and never think of Repentance: As *Elijah* told *Ahab*, 1 King. 18. 18. *It*

is thou and thy Fathers house that trouble and disquiet Israel.

5. BY this short view we have taken of *Patience*, we may behold the true Character of a *Patient Man*: He is one of a *Mild Nature, and true Christian Temper, swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath*, 1 Pet. 3. 4. Phil. 2. 5. Jam. 1. 19. His head is not over-laden with *Cares of this Life*, nor his heart with *Fears*, his eyes are not itching after *Vanities*, nor his Ears after *Novelties*, Luk. 21. 34. Prov. 29. 25. Jer. 22. 17. Act. 17. 21.

6. His *Hands* are not intermeddling with impertinent business, nor his *Feet* swift to run into *Evil*: His *Mouth* is far from *Cursing* and *Bitterness*, kept in as a *Bridle*, that it should not *Offend*, 1 *Thes.* 4. 11. Prov. 4. 26. *Rom.* 3. 14, *Psal.* 39. 1. *Psal.* 17. 3. His whole body is fit for a Load of Injuries, which he bears not out of baseness, and cowardise, because he dares not Revenge, but out of Christian Fortitude, because he will not, *Rom.* 12. 13.

7. HIS *Arms* are strengthned by the *Mighty God of* Jacob, *his hands are washt in Innocency*, and his breast is *the breast-plate of Righteousness*, Gen. 49. 24. *Psal.* 26. 6. *Eph.* 6. 4. The hid-man of his heart, consisteth of *A meek and a quiet Spirit*, and his Bowels are *Bowels of Mercy, Meekness and Compassion*, 1 Pet. 3. 4. Col. 3. 12. *His Loins are girt about with Truth*, his *Knees* are pliable to *Bow*, his *Legs* to bear, and his *Foot standeth in an even place*, Eph. 6. 14. Psal. 26. 12.

8. HE is one can moderate himself in Prosperity, and content himself in Adversity. His hopes are so strong they can insult over the greatest discouragements; and his apprehensions so deep, that when he hath once fastned, he sooner leaveth his life then his hold. Contrariety of Events, Exercise, not dismay him; and when Crosses Afflict him, he seeth a Divine Hand, invisibly striking with those sensible scourges, against which he dares not Murmur nor Rebel.

9. HE

9. HE troubleth not himſelf, with Exciting Thoughts nor others, with needleſs Suits: He intermeddles not in others buſineſs, nor adventures upon raſh Attempts, he offends none with provoking Terms, not taketh offence at others Actions, He lendeth not his Ear to idle Tales, nor ſoweth diſcord, or ſeeketh Revenge: But hath a meek heart, a contented mind, and a charitable eye; his Tongue is Affable, hand Peaceable, and his geſture ſociable. His Deportment is Neighbourly, his Judgment charitable, a loving Speaker, and a friendly Converſer: He puts up all wrongs patiently, and wrongs none willingly. And ſuch manner of Men ought we to be in all holy Converſation. And I ſhall end with the words of the holy Apoſtle, and deſire of God, that he would *direct your hearts into his love, and into the patient waiting for him*, 2 Theſ. 3. 5.

I ſhall not think it improper to inſert here a Relation of Sir *Thomas Moore*, that excellent Pattern of *Patience*, who wholly reſigned himſelf to the will of the Divine Providence.

Sir *Thomas* returning from beyond Sea after his Embaſy, and being remote from his Houſe with the King, in the Month of *Auguſt*, part of his dwelling Houſe, and all his Barns laden with Corn, were by a ſudden Fire conſumed, his Lady by a Letter certified him of this ſad miſchance, to which he return'd her this Anſwer,

Madam, *All Health wiſhed to you; I do underſtand that all our Barns and Corn, with ſome of our Neighbours likewiſe are waſted by a fire, an heavy and lamentable loſs, (but only that it was Gods will) of ſuch abundance of Wealth; but becauſe it ſo ſeemed good to God we muſt not only patiently, but alſo willingly, bear and ſubmit to the hand of God ſo ſtretched out upon us. God gave whatſoever we have loſt; and ſeeing it hath pleaſed him to take away what he gave, his Divine Will be done: Never let us repine at this, but let us take it in good part, we are bound to be thank-ful as well in Adverſity as in Proſperity; and if we caſt up our Accounts well; this which we eſteem ſo great a loſs, is rather a great gain: For what is neceſſary and conducing to our Salvation,*

Salvation, is better known to God than us, I intreat you therefore to have a good heart, and to take all your Family with you to the Church, and there give thanks to God for all these things which he hath pleas'd to take away, as well as for his blessings which he hath bestow'd on us; and to praise him for that which is left; It is an easie matter with God if he please, to Augment what is yet left, but if he shall see good to take away more, even as it shall please him so let it be.

And let Enquiry be made, what my Neighbours have lost, and wish them not to be sorry: For I will not that my Neighbours shall suffer any thing by my loss, though I leave not my self any thing; and though all should be taken away, I pray thee, O Alice, be joyful in the Lord with my Children and all our Family; all these things, and we; are in the hands of the Lord. Let us therefore wholly depend upon his good will; and so no losses shall ever hurt us: Farewel.

From the Court at *Woodstock*
September 13*th.* 1529.

What a sincere Devotion was here to the Divine Will of God! What a Letter from a heart truly setled upon Heav'n? This Master of the Family had learn'd his Lesson well, and was grown a proficient in the *Art of Patience.* This was a Man that by supporting himself upon God's Providence, was able to bear all losses sweetly. Behold an *Ostrich*, able to digest Iron! His Barns were burnt, but his Mind was cool, *Patience* kept him in his uprightness. In a short space after, God requited his Losses; in *September* he received this heavy news: In *October* he was promoted Lord Chancellor of *England*; so that not only Honour, but his Means also were mightily enlarged, that now he needs not repair his Barns, but may build new ones.

Certainly there is not in the World such a holy sort of Artifice, so Divine a charm to unite God to us, as this of resigning our selves to him. We find the *Gibeonites* by yielding themselves *Vassals* to the *Israelites*, had their whole Army at their back to rescue them in their danger, *Jos.* 10. 6. and can we think God is less considerate of his Homagers and Dependents? No, certainly, his Honour, as well as his Compassion is concern'd in the relief of those who have Surrendred themselves to him.

A Prayer for Patience.

O *Most gracious God, let not the Spirit of Impatience poſſeſs me, whereby I may in any meaſure incur thy diſpleaſure, thou art my Maker, O let me not ſtrive with thee, I am the Work of thy Hands, and therefore with thee there is no contending; if I provoke thee by ſtrugling under the Yoke of Affliction, the end thereof will be Gaul to my Neck, and Bitterneſs to my Conſcience: But, O Lord, it is not my Puniſhment thou purſueſt after, but my Repentance and Amendment of Life; and what thou art pleaſed to inflict upon me is but to chaſe me to my Duty; which when I have perfectly learnt, I know thou wilt fully Reward and Recompence my Patience, that I may poſſeſs my own Soul in the day of the Lord Jeſus.*

2. *O thou that art the wiſe diſpoſer of all Things, both in Heaven and Earth, let me look up to thee, from whence cometh Affliction, and then inſpect into my own Heart, where I ſhall find out the efficient Cauſe: O let nothing then ſeem to perplex me, which thou in thy good pleaſure knoweth to be advantagious; but let me ever be content to drink of the bitterest Cup of Affliction, which thou haſt allotted me; O let thy good Spirit ſtill ſtrive with me, and draw me unto thee with the Cords of thy Love; it is of thy tender Mercies that I am not conſumed, but I know thy Compaſſion fails not towards poor and wretched Sinners: Lord give me Grace to perform this Duty, and ſay of my Affliction, as thou, O Jeſu, didſt of thy bitter Cup and Paſſion;* Father! if it be thy will let this Cup paſs from me! if not; not my Will, but thy Will be done. *Amen.*

The CLOSE.

Conſiſting of Scriptural Ejaculations, referring to the ſeveral Sections of the before-going Treatiſe.

1. HAVING gone through this ſhort Tract of the *Art of Patience*, I ſhall now lay down theſe following Ejaculations, as being moſt neceſſary, and we have St. *James*'s Teſtimony for it, *Is any among you afflicted, let him pray*, James 5.13. This is

is the Great and Soveraign *Catholicon* of the distressed Soul, which is able to give relief to all the forementioned Complaints.

2. FOR *Meekness*, *Humility* and *Patience*; hearken unto thy Saviour's Lesson, Mat. 11.29. *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your Souls*: And St. *Paul*, earnestly beseeches us, Ephes. 4. 1, 2, 3. *To walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith we are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love.* And *David* gives us this Comfort, Psal. 25. 8. *Them that are meek shall be guide in judgment: and such as are gentle, them shall he learn his way.* And Psal. 9. 18. *For the poor shall not always be forgotten: The patient abiding of the meek shall not perish for ever.* Psal. 37. 9. *Wicked doers shall be rooted out, but they that patiently abide the Lord, those shall inherit the land.* And then lastly thou mayst say, to thy great joy and comfort, *I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my calling*, Psal. 40. 1.

3. WHEN thou art cast down on thy Bed of Sickness, *Call for the Elders of the Church, and let them pray*, James 5. 14. This was *Hezekiah's* Recipe, when he *was sick unto Death; then he turned his Face to the Wall, and prayed*, 2 King. 20. 1, 2. Pray with *David*; Psal. 6. 2. *Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak; O Lord heal me, for my bones are vexed.* And take the Counsel of the wise Man: Eccluf. 38. 9. *My Son, in thy Sickness be not negligent, but pray unto the Lord, and he will make thee whole.*

4. IF thou art afflicted in Conscience, pray with *David*, Psal. 8. 5, 6. *The sorrows of Hell compassed me about, and the snares of Death prevented me: In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cryed unto my God.*

5. ART thou infested with importunate Temptations, pray earnestly with St. *Paul*, when the Messenger of Satan was sent to buffet him: 2 Cor. 12. 8.

Thrice I beſought the Lord that it might depart from me: And Holy *David* he complains, *while I ſuffer thy terrors, I am diſtracted; thy fierce wrath goeth over me: But unto thee have I cryed, O Lord, and in the morning ſhall my prayer prevent thee*, Pſal. 88. 15, 16, 17.

6. IF thou art diſheartned with imbecillity of Grace, uſe *David's* Prayer, *I am feeble and ſore broken, I have roared by reaſon of the diſquietneſs of my heart: Lord, all my deſire is before thee*, Pſal. 38. 8, 9.

7. WHEN thou art afflicted with loſs of Reputation, and Slander of Evil Tongues, ſay with the Pſalmiſt, *The mouth of the wicked, and the mouth of the deceitful are opened againſt me; they have ſpoken againſt me with a lying Tongue: Hold not thy peace, O God, of my praiſe*, Pſal. 109. 1, 2.

8. IN time of publick Calamities, of *War, Famine*, or *Peſtilence*, pray with good *Jehoſaphat*, who importun'd God with his Gracious Promiſe made to *Solomon: If when evil cometh upon us, as the Sword, Judgment, or Peſtilence, or Famine, we ſtand before thy houſe, and in thy preſence, and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt hear and help*: And ſhuts up his zealous Supplication with, *neither know we what to do, but our Eyes are upon thee*, 2 Chron. 9. 12.

9. AT loſs of Friends, in thy affliction, pray and have recourſe to God, as *Ezekiel*, when *Peletiah*, the Son of *Benajah* died: Ezek. 11, 13. *Then fell I down upon my face, and cryed with a loud voice, and ſaid, ah, Lord God! Wilt thou make a full end of the remnant of* Iſrael?

10. IN time of Poverty, pray with *David*, Pſal. 109. 24, 25, 26. *I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me: I became alſo a reproach to them, when they that looked upon me, ſhaked their heads: Help me, O Lord my God; Oh ſave me according to thy mercy.*

11. IN Confinement, pray with *Jonah* when he was ſhut up within the Living Walls of the Whale;

Jonah

Jonah 2. 1, 2. *I cryed by reason of my affliction unto the Lord*; and joyn with *Asaph* in prayer, Psal. 79. 11. *Oh let the sorrowful sighing of the Prisoners come before thee, and according to the greatness of thy power, preserve thou those that are appointed to die.*

12. IN Exile, use *Solomons* Prescription; 2 Chr. 6. 36, 37, 38, 39. *If thy people be carried away into a Land far off, or near: Yet if they bethink themselves in the Land whether they are carried, and turn, and pray to thee, in the Land of their Captivity. If they return to thee with all their hearts, and pray towards the Land thou gavest to their fore-fathers, &c. then hear thou from Heaven, even thy dwelling place, their Prayer and their Supplication.*

13. HAST thou lost thy Seeing and Hearing, make thy address to him that said, *Who hath made mans mouth, or who maketh the Dumb, and the Deaf, or the Seeing, or the Blind? Have not I the Lord?* Exod. 4. 11. Cry aloud to him with *Bartimeus*, Mark 10. 47, 51. *Lord that I may receive my sight:* And if thou be hopeless of thine outward sight, yet pray with the Psalmist, *O Lord, open thou mine Eyes, that I may see the wondrous things of thy Law*, Psal. 119. 18.

14. ART thou afflicted with Sterility, pray with *Isaac, who intreated the Lord for his Wife, because she was barren: And the Lord was intreated of him, and* Rebekah *his Wife conceived*, Gen 25. 21. And *Hannah*, she prayed, *in bitterness of Soul unto the Lord, and wept sore, and received a Gracious Answer*, 1 Sam. 1. 10.

15. ART thou troubled and weakened for want of repose, pray with *Asaph*, Psal. 77. 3, 4, 1. *I complained, and my Spirit was overwhelmed, thou holdest mine eyes waking, I am sore troubled that I cannot speak; I cryed to God with my voice, even unto God with my voice, and he gave ear unto me.*

16. DOST thou droop under Old Age? Pray with *David*; *Oh cast me not off in the time of Old Age, forsake*

forsake me not when my strength faileth. O God thou hast taught me from my Youth: Now also when I am Old and Gray-headed, O God forsake me not, Psal. 71. 9, 17, 18.

17. ART thou troubled and dismayed with fears of Death? Pray with *David*, Psal. 18. 3, 4, 5, 6, 13. *My Soul is full of troubles, and my Life draweth nigh unto the Grave; I am counted with them that down into the pit, I am as a man that hath no strength, free among the dead, thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deep: But unto thee have I cryed, O Lord, and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee.*

18. DOST thou tremble at the thoughts of Judgment? So did the man after Gods own heart, Psal. 119. 120. *My flesh trembled for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments*; look up with *Jeremiah*, and say to thy Saviour, *O Lord, thou hast pleaded the causes of my Soul, thou hast redeemed my Life: O Lord, judge thou my cause*, Lam. 3. 58, 59.

19. ART thou afraid of the *Power*, *Malice* and *Subtility* of thy Spiritual Enemies? Use Psal. 59. 1. *Deliver me from mine Enemies, O my God, defend me, from them that rise up against me, O hide me from the secret Counsel of the wicked*; and Psal. 25. 19, 20. *Consider mine Enemies for they are many, and they hate me with cruell hatred: O keep my Soul, and deliver me*: St. *Paul* prayed earnestly that he might be freed from the Messenger of *Satan*, whose buffets he felt, and was answered with, *My Grace is sufficient for thee*; so he sues for all Gods Saints, *May the God of peace tread down Satan under your feet shortly*, 2 *Cor.* 12. 9. *Rom.* 16. 19

20. WHAT ever evil it be that presseth thy Soul, have speedy recourse to the Throne of Grace; pour out thy heart into the Ears of the Father of all Mercies, and God of all Comfort, and be sure, if not of redress, yet of ease: We have his word for it that cannot fail us, *Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorifie me*, Psal. 50. 15.

Fashionable

Fashionable Supplicants may talk to God; but be assur'd, he that can truly pray, can never be truly miserable: Of our selves we lie open to evils; our rescue is from above; and what entercourse have we with Heaven but by Prayer? Prayer can deliver us from Dangers, avert Judgments, prevent Mischiefs, and procure Blessings, it is an Antidote against Temptation, and a Soveraign Balsom for afflicted Consciences. It is the Instrument of fetching down all good things to us, whether Spiritual or Temporal; no Prayer that is qualified as it ought to be, but is sure to bring down a Blessing according to that of the Wise Man, Eccluſ. 35. 17. *The prayer of the humble pierceth the Cloulds, and will not turn away till the higheſt regard it*: It sanctifies all good things to us, and sweetens the bitterness of our afflictions, it opens the Windows of Heaven, shuts up the Bars of Death, and vanquishes the powers of Hell; therefore let us not cease in making our addresses to him, who is the Fountain of all Goodness; and *at whoſe right hand there is pleaſures for evermore*, Psal. 16. 11. And let us with all lowliness as well of Body as of Mind, according to that of the Psalmist, say, O *come let us Worship, let us fall down and kneel before the Lord our Maker*, Psal. 95. 6. *For he is our hope and ſtrength, and a very preſent help in trouble.* Ps. 46. 1.

A Concluſive Prayer.

BLESSED *Lord, who haſt cauſed all Holy Scripture and good Literature to be written for my Learning; grant that I may in ſuch wiſe hear, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digeſt them, that by Patience and Comfort of thy Holy Word, I may embrace, and even hold faſt the bleſſed hope of Everlaſting Life, which thou haſt given me in my Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.* Amen.

2. *Prevent me, O Lord, in all my doings, with thy moſt gracious favour, and further me with thy continual help, that in all my Works begun, continued and ended in thee, I may glorifie thy*

holy

holy Name, and finally by thy Mercy obtain Everlasting Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

3. *Almighty God who hast promised to hear the Petitions of them that ask in thy Son's Name, I beseech thee mercifully to incline thine Ears unto me, who have now made my Prayers and Supplications unto thee: And grant that those things I have faithfully asked according to thy will may effectually be obtained, to the relief of my Necessities, and to the setting forth of thy Glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord.* Amen.

The Blessing.

THE Peace of God which passeth all Understanding, keep my Heart and Mind in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and the Blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: The Virtue of Christ's blessed Cross and Passion, his Glorious Resurrection and Ascention, and the Coming of the Holy Ghost; be with me now, and at the Hour of Death. Amen.

FINIS.

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